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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO SOME FACTORS
AFFECTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH
TEACHING, LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT IN
MACAU.**

by

TANG FUN HEI



8 NOV 2002

**A Thesis submitted in part fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education**

**School of Education
University of Durham**

2002

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the current situation of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau. It compares the existing situation in English teaching in Macau with an ideal situation found in the literature, and accounts for the discrepancy found between them. Through interviews and the first large scale survey of English teachers of representative ages of students and representative types of schooling in Macau, using perception-based data, a range of problems are identified in English teaching, learning and achievement. These problems are seen to lie in several fields of English and to have multiple causes. The problems are seen to be mutually reinforcing, and the thesis suggests that, because of this, simple solutions are difficult to find. Recommendations for improvement and further research into English teaching are made.

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Declaration

This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously in candidature for any other degree or diploma.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the many teachers and colleagues in education and schools in Macau for their very considerable help in being part of the empirical research for this thesis. They have given of their time freely for this investigation, and without them the study would have been impossible. I hope that the thesis brings benefit to English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Michael Byram, for his support, care, time and advice throughout the preparation of this thesis.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The provision of high quality English teaching and learning in Macau has assumed a high profile in recent years. Comments have been made in business, education, political and social circles about the need for Macau to increase its attention to the provision of high quality English speakers in order for its society to develop, in order for Macau to maintain its position as a multicultural bridge between East and West, and in order to develop its major economies which are tourism and trade. Such calls have been made more strongly since the handover of Macau from Portugal in 1999.

Several concerns have been raised in Macau about the supposed poor quality of English amongst its residents and students, though, to date, no rigorous, formal or wide-ranging evaluation of the situation has been undertaken, and no public data are available on student, school or teacher performance. It is widely heard in Macau that teachers, employers, higher education staff all complain that the level of English in Macau students is very poor, and they wonder why, after up to fifteen years of learning English, students are incapable of speaking more than a few simple sentences, their communicative competence is extremely poor, and their understanding is very limited. Reliance on traditional forms of teaching and grammar-translation methods and heavy use of textbooks is said to be strong. These comments are very largely at the level of rumor and hearsay; the nature, strength and veracity of their claims are examined in this thesis. The purposes of the thesis are to:



- examine the current situation of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau;
- identify reasons for this situation;
- compare the existing situation in English in Macau with an ideal situation found in the literature;
- identify areas of discrepancy between the ideal and actual situation in Macau, together with reasons for this;
- identify problems of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau;
- make recommendations for improvement of the situation in English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau.

To achieve this the thesis conducts a non-empirical and empirical investigation. The thesis gathers empirical data on the existing situation of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau. To date this has never been done in a systematic or widespread study, and the originality and significance of the thesis are that it is the first in its field in Macau to do this. Indeed there is almost no research undertaken at all on English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau. In Macau there are no public state-wide examinations, and so the evidence base on students' performance is absent. Some indicators of school performance are provided by the numbers of students entering University (for which English is a requirement), and a few secondary schools in Macau enroll their students in overseas examinations (e.g. GCE, TOEFL and GCSE examinations); however these data are incomplete and do not cover all ages and students.

Further, there is no department within the government's Education Department which has responsibility for inspection, advisory or examination services; the problem is compounded by the limited control that the government exerts on Education in what is largely a private sector of provision (the government has only less than seven per cent of students in schools in Macau). The situation of education in Macau and, in particular, English teaching and curricula, is reviewed in chapter two of this thesis.

The thesis develops an 'ideal model' of English teaching and learning by reviewing the literature on factors which contribute to effective teaching, learning and student achievement in English. It is a widely-focused review, and it is designed to outline a range of factors, sufficient to be used to interrogate practice in Macau, rather than to go into detail on each of the factors. To conduct a widely focused review of a comprehensive range of factors and the word limit imposed on the study, inevitably, there is a degree of superficiality in the treatment of the factors which impinge on teaching and learning. The literature review and the development of an ideal model are undertaken in chapter three.

As the thesis is the first empirical evaluative study conducted in the field of English teaching, learning and achievements in Macau, it was considered to be more appropriate to set out a comprehensive range of factors – *a widely-focused review* – than to conduct an *in-depth* analysis of factors that may contribute to effective English teaching, learning and achievements, as suggested by the literature. This would establish a solid and sufficient basis to conduct the empirical research to investigate the current situation of

English teaching, learning and achievements in Macau and the claims of ineffective teaching and learning. To date no survey had 'mapped' these field in English in Macau, and therefore, this initial 'scene-setting' was considered important. Such 'scene-setting' inevitably sacrifices depth to breadth.

Then the thesis uses the 'ideal model' of teaching to investigate the situation of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau. How this is done is addressed in chapter four (the research design). The study uses a stratified, large sample in order to be able to make generalizations about the wider situation in Macau. Further, in using a mixed methodology and multi-instrument approach, reliability and validity are addressed, which enables this thesis to constitute the first major study in its field in Macau. Given this, the empirical investigation provides an overall 'map' of the current situation rather than going in to each area in detail. The data collected are perception-based, and reflect the views of a representative sample of teachers of English in Macau schools (the absence of other forms of more objective data is a consequence of there being no state-wide public examination system in Macau, nor any inspection data). The data from the investigation are presented in chapter five and discussed in chapter six. In the closing chapter suggestions are made for future investigations and research in the field.

By comparing the ideal model with the situation that is found in the empirical investigation, conclusions are drawn about the current state of English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau. It is found that student achievement is generally poor, and that the effectiveness of teaching practices is very questionable. Problems are found in

curricula, syllabuses, teaching and learning styles, assessment and testing, teacher preparation and resources. It is found that significant problems also lie in the field of student motivation to learn English in what is largely a non-English environment in Macau. Very many of the problems in English teaching, learning and achievement in Macau are deep-seated, and several are not exclusive to English but can be found in other curriculum areas, and many of which, in combination, render it very difficult to break into the practices which contribute to the poor situation found in Macau. It is suggested that several areas of poor practice are mutually reinforcing, and so change will need to operate on a variety of fronts simultaneously. These changes question long-established teaching practices not only in Macau, but also in characteristics of the Chinese learner more widely. Nevertheless it is suggested that major changes are necessary in Macau, and recommendations are made for improvements to the situation (chapter seven).

Changes will impact significantly on methodologies of English teaching, pedagogy, initial and post-initial teacher education, learning styles, curricula and assessment.

Macau is a unique city – one of the most densely populated places in the world, one whose educational development has been largely in private hands (with a heavy influence of the Christian church) and influenced by nearly 450 years of a *laissez-faire* style of Portuguese colonial administration which has resulted in an under-developed education system. Its infrastructure of support for education is very limited, and the quality of its teaching, learning and achievement is, at best, largely unknown and, at worst, as this thesis demonstrates, very weak. There is a need for Macau's education to be upgraded in

order to be relevant for the twenty-first century; in this, English will feature prominently, yet this thesis finds that the current states of English teaching, learning and achievement are both poor and very problematical. The thesis paints a picture of the situation of English in Macau, which has not yet been successful, and makes recommendations for its improvement.

The thesis to be defended is that the situations of teaching, learning and achievement in English have considerable room for improvement, and that these are the consequences of a range of factors which are identified in the empirical study. This situation is very difficult to break because local, environmental, cultural, structural, pedagogical, curricular, assessment, teacher-related, student-related and motivational factors combine to reinforce each other in producing practice which leads to the reported poor situation.

CHAPTER TWO

EDUCATION IN MACAU

2.1. The context of Macau

2.1.1 *Geographical background*

Macau – a very small peninsula with two adjacent islands, Taipa and Coloane – was a Portuguese colony from 1557 until December, 1999, and it is now a Special Administrative Region of China (SAR) under the ‘one country, two systems’ policy. The territory consists of the Macau peninsula, Taipa island and Coloane island. The total area of Macau and the two islands together is 23.8 square kilometers. It has a population of about 437,500. Census returns indicate that some 95% of the population are Chinese by race, there is a small cadre of Portuguese and a mixed-race group called Macanese whose parents are Portuguese and Chinese (totalling 3%) and 2% are of other nationalities. Portuguese and Chinese are the official languages while English is also in use to a certain extent (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2000a).

2.1.2. *Economy*

Macau’s economy is largely low-skilled based. It is not highly diversified (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos (2001a). Some of Macau’s revenue comes from the manufacturing industry. Products are exported to areas around Asia, Europe and

America. 84.7% of the exports go to countries, e.g., USA and Europe, where English is needed in order to do business (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2000a). Another source of Macau's income comes from the wholesale and retail trade of motor vehicles, personal and household consumption, tourism and gaming industry (*ibid.*).

The major government revenue comes from the tourism and gaming industry. Statistics show that this accounted for 45% of Macau's GDP in 1997, and the industry itself includes casino operations, tourist services, hotel, restaurant, entertainment, passenger transport, jewelry, souvenirs, and the antique business, of which the gaming industry is the core (Macao Development Strategy Research Center, 1999). The direct taxes from gambling in 2000 amounted to 5,467.8 million patacas and the budgeted revenue for year 2001 was 5,568.8 millions (Macau Economic Services, 2001). Visitors to Macau were mainly Cantonese or Mandarin speakers and they came mostly from Hong Kong (52.4%), Mainland China (26.9%), Taiwan (14.2%) and Japan (1.8%) (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2001b). In 2000, the total number of visitor arrivals was 9,162,212, an increase of 23% compared with 1999 (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2001c). Due to the nature of tourists visiting Macau, the need for English amongst employees working in the tourism and gambling industry is not really so important.

In the 1980s, manufacturing overtook tourism and gambling as the top industry. Due to the economic downturn in Asia, the growth of Macau's export manufacturing industry slowed down. To sustain the prosperity of its economy, it was necessary for Macau to lift and transform its reliance on the manufacturing industry. Research conducted in 1997

concluded that to re-vitalize Macau's economy, it must head towards the development of high technology industries, which was the world-wide trend. At the same time, Macau's economy was developing into a service economy and it was necessary to revitalize the tourism and gambling industry to support the development of the industries (Macao Development Strategy Research Center, 1999: 61-123).

Under the new SAR government, suggestions had been made to ensure that Macau sustained its prosperity through economic improvement and development. In his policy address 2001, the SAR Chief Executive announced that there was an increase in Macau's revenue income, despite the backwash of the Asian economic crisis, which was brought in from gambling (2.6% increment), tourism (2.4% increment) and export (15% increment). The government was determined to provide attractive conditions and terms so that more revenue and investments would be brought in through gaming, tourism and exports. The monopoly of casino ownership was ended in 2002, with the hope of improving the local economy through increased competition. Further, the government was also trying to improve and upgrade the quality of education with the establishment of more tertiary educational bodies. More focus would also be placed on training more IT professionals, with the intention of developing high technology industries in Macau and turning it into an international city through technology (<http://www.al.gov.mo>). In this enterprise English takes on an added significance.

Before and after the handover there was much talk of Macau having to diversify, internalize and globalize its economy in order to survive. Its traditional position as a

bridge between China and the West – with its free port status and colonial Portuguese links, place it in a favorable position here. This will require a massive increase in the facility of its population with English as the international language of trade, information technology, business and commerce.

2.2. Educational background

2.2.1 Laissez-faire style of schooling

Education in Macau is the result of a unique form of colonialism for over four hundred years – an extreme *laissez-faire* style of the previous government, with very little or no history of government involvement in the provision, supervision and monitoring of schools and the local educational system. Schooling in Macau was largely a voluntary and private enterprise (Chiu, 1987; Tang and Morrison, 1998). When Macau was under the previous government, no strict laws or regulations existed to control or regulate the operation of the private schools. They had absolute freedom to devise their own curricula, recruit teachers, determine the conditions of service and the size of classes (Rosa, 1990; Governo de Macau, 1990; Tang and Morrison, 1998). Private schools were completely responsible for their own management and budget, while the official schools – state schools that were established for the very small Portuguese speaking minority, including Macanese (Tang and Morrison, 1998) – were well provided for by the government. An Education Department does exist; before the change of government, it had always been overwhelmingly concerned with the ‘government schools’ (*ibid.*).

It was only in 1987, when the Chinese and Portuguese governments signed the agreement for the territory to be returned to China in 1999, that private schools were given a certain amount of subsidy if Portuguese were included in the curriculum (Bray and Hui, 1989). In 1991 a law was announced (Governo de Macau, 1991) to set up some guidelines for private schools such as the scope (kindergarten, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary levels) and definitions of education, constitutional principles for education and schools, counseling, human resources, facilities, subsidies, educational system and management, educational development and evaluation (<http://www.dsej.gov.mo>). The effects of these guidelines were largely confined to paper; in reality, private schools still have full autonomy over decision-making.

In 1995 schooling was turned into more of a public good when the government introduced the subsidized educational scheme (Tang and Morrison, 1998) (discussed later).

2.2.2. *School types*

In Macau, there are 92 officially registered schools in the 1999/2000 academic year (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, 2000c) with over 151 campuses (Direcção Serviços de Estatístico e Censos de Macau, 2000a). Figures from the government's Statistics Department (*ibid.*) indicate that around three quarters of the schools are private and the medium of instruction is: 76.8% Chinese-medium; 8%

English-medium; 4% Portuguese-medium; 10.4% Portuguese- and Chinese-medium; 0.8% other languages. Schools can be divided mainly into three categories (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, 2000c): private religious (42.4%), private non-religious (33.7%) and government schools (19.6%) and four special schools providing special education for students with special needs (4.3%). This distribution clearly indicates the limited involvement of the previous government in education. The following table provides an analysis of the principal kinds of schools in Macau and the population of students in each type of school.

Table 2.1: Distribution of government and private schools and students in Macau

	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of F5 students	Number of F6 students	Total number of students (%)
Government primary and secondary	18	6,213	187	73	6.27%
Private non-religious: primary and secondary	31	40,997	1,483	1,083	41.43%
Religious primary and secondary	39	51,579	2,209	1,319	52.12%
Special education	4	175			0.18%
Total	92	98,964	3,879	2,475	100%

Source: Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude (2000c)

2.2.3 School systems

Macau has never had a single school system. Various schools have adopted different models imported from Portugal, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan and Hong Kong. Consequently the number of years in the primary, junior and senior

secondary schools varies. Macau's private schools can use any one of the models except the Portuguese, which is usually implemented in 'official schools' (Alves Pinto, 1987).

The school system models are shown below:

Table 2.2: The school systems in Macau

School system	Portuguese	Hong Kong Chinese	Taiwan	People's Republic of China
	Number of Years	Number of Years	Number of Years	Number of Years
Primary (P1-P6)	4	6	6	6
Preparatory (or Primary 5 and 6)	2	-	-	-
Junior Secondary (F1-F3 or F1-F5)	3	5	3	5
Senior Secondary (F4-F5 or F4-F6))	2	-	3	-
Pre-University (or F6)	1	1	-	1

The 18 government schools in Macau use the Portuguese model: 4+2+3+2+1. All the private non-religious schools use the Taiwanese model: 6+3+3. 23 out of 39 private-religious schools are 'all-through' schools, and 5 of them use the Hong Kong Chinese model, which is the same as that used in the People's Republic of China: 6+3+2+1. The rest of them are using the Taiwanese model: 6+3+3 (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, 1999). Students whose schools do not have F6 have to join schools with a sixth form or have to continue their studies in the Center for Pre-University Studies (CPU) in the University of Macau in order to become qualified to study in the local university or overseas. The other alternative is to undertake diploma courses or programs offered by other tertiary institutes in Macau which will accept students with only F5 qualification. In 2000, there were 2,475 students receiving F6 education before they go on to university studies (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos de Macau, 2000a).

2.2.4 *Teacher training*

Owing to China's 'Open Door' policy in the mid-1980s, there was an influx of mainland China immigrants into Macau (Ho, 1997). Official figures showed that from 1987 to 1997 there was a 26% increase in the population, that is, from 312,207 to 422,046 (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 1997). Consequently the number of school-age students increased, and there was a much greater demand on education which led to the building of more schools and the training of more qualified teachers.

Until 1989 most teachers did not have any training or even a proper education. 50% of the primary teachers then had only junior or senior secondary education. At secondary level, only 16% of the teaching force had secondary education, and only 9% of the teachers had tertiary or teacher training qualification (Rosa, 1990). The situation improved in the face of the handover in 1999 (Bray and Hui, 1989). The government then fully supported teacher education (TE) through mainly one institution – Macau University (formerly East Asia University).

The number of teachers increased, from 2,294 in 1985 to 3,669 in 1999; 52.5% of these 3,669 teachers had received teacher training, 39.3% had tertiary education and 8% had obtained a diploma qualification, that is, a secondary education (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2000). This shows a big improvement when compared to the situation in 1989. This was the consequence of the law Decreto – Lei no. 04/90/M

(Governo de Macau, 1990) passed by the government that teachers should all have a teaching qualification to be entitled to a monthly subsidy given by the government and to be approved to teach, though, clearly the incidence of unqualified teachers is still high. Secondary school teachers may have a subject degree, and under the same law, they need to undertake a postgraduate teaching certificate in order to qualify themselves to teach and to receive a monthly subsidy.

2.2.5 In-service TE programs

More formal courses, termed Continuing Professional Development of Teachers Summer Courses, jointly offered by the Education Department and various institutes such as the Faculty of Education of the University of Macau, have run since 1990. These courses are usually held in the summer, so that in-service teachers can make use of the summer break to attend them in order to improve and upgrade their teaching expertise and qualification; a Certificate of Attendance is awarded. Courses are mainly on educational theories and concepts. The scope of the courses cover General Education, Secondary Education, Primary Education, Special Education, Adult Education and IT. The English teaching workshops aim to develop trainees' speaking and writing skills, and how to integrate the four language skills within a single lesson (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, 2001b).

2.2.6 *Textbooks and pedagogy*

Macau had no locally produced textbooks until the early 1990s, and then these were only textbooks on civics and health science, which were produced locally by the Education Department (Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude, 1994). All textbooks are imported from places from which the educational models have been borrowed. English textbooks are mainly imported from Hong Kong, as Hong Kong has a much bigger market for publishers, and thus there is more variety in the market. These texts contain much material that is more related to Hong Kong than to Macau and hence, unsurprisingly, they can be demotivating for students. Despite this, teachers adapt the materials to suit their own teaching purposes. Pedagogy, driven by textbooks to a large extent, is often didactic, curricula are traditionalist, and there is a great emphasis on rote learning, drill, and practice.

2.2.7 *Recent reforms*

In 1989, a symposium entitled Education Reform in Macau (Wong, 1991) was held at the University of Macau with the intention of forcing the government to be more responsible for providing an improved or even a free education for the local people while improving several other long-neglected issues such as:

- the establishment of a common curriculum;
- setting up a public examination to assess students' academic performance;

- offering vocational training for young school leavers;
- opening more in-service and pre-service teacher training programs;
- subsidizing private schools and allocating more money;
- setting up a teachers' pension scheme for private school teachers.

However, since then little was touched upon until 1995 except the promotion of the Portuguese language, when free education for all was provided (Governo de Macau, 1995).

In June 1995, it was announced (Governo de Macau, 1995) that the government was going to implement a 7 year free education scheme by subsidizing students in the last year of nursery education and all primary students if their schools joined the new educational scheme. Each student brought 4,800 patacas a year as a subsidy to the school, and schools which chose to join the scheme had to decrease the class size to 45 (from as many as 60 and over), or the amount of subsidy would diminish proportionately, starting from the 46th student. Schools could still collect from students 20% of that amount as a miscellaneous charge.

In August 1997, the 10 year free educational scheme was announced (Governo de Macau, 1997). The scheme was now extended to form 3 students. The amount would be 8,500 patacas per annum per student. Again, that amount would be reduced proportionately if the class sizes were bigger than 45. Schools could still collect 20% of this amount from students to supplement whatever was needed. However, schools still had the option of

joining the scheme(s) or not. For schools which joined the scheme, an officer would be sent to the school to inspect its budget allocation, and to report back to the Education Department. Schools also needed to send in to the Education Department a expense and budget report.

Schools in the subsidized scheme were encouraged strongly to adopt the curricular framework provided, as reference, by the Education Department. They needed to try to reduce class size as much as possible to an ideal number of 45 students, though this was totally voluntary. At the time of writing, schools still have very great flexibility over their own curricula, management, resource allocations, etc. Subsidized schools are required to submit an annual budget and expenses report to the Education Department. Such schools continue to have great autonomy.

Before the introduction of this subsidized educational scheme in 1995, the educational situation in Macau was a completely free market with no state intervention. The new scheme turned the mostly private education into subsidized private education with basically still very little or no regulation from the government. There was little co-ordination between the government and private schools.

This situation was acknowledged by the new SAR government and in mid-2001, it decided to make several changes (Macau Daily, 2001). The government realized that it needed to be more involved with what schools were doing, in addition to monitoring the schools' expenses. It was also necessary to monitor the schools in terms of the content of

their curricula, the recruitment of teachers, facilities, etc. The government also suggested that in order to raise the quality of education in Macau, schools needed to be more transparent in addition to reporting their financial status and expenditure, so that the public could have clear indicators of their teaching and learning effectiveness. Further, teachers' professional development, pedagogy, teaching efficiency and IT resources were all aspects to receive government assistance. The possibility of small class teaching would also be tried as an experiment in order to raise teaching quality, and this experiment would be tried first within government schools, which have always had smaller classes than private-religious and private non-religious schools.

In his 2001 Policy Address, the Macau SAR Chief Executive announced that in order to keep up with the pace, needs and development of Macau, it was important to improve and upgrade education in Macau. A Tertiary Education Research and Evaluation Committee had been established to enhance education quality and effectiveness in Macau. Further, the curricula and teaching materials for kindergarten, primary and secondary education had been evaluated and approved. Subsidies had been allocated to improve and upgrade teaching facilities as a backup for both teaching and learning. At the same time, vocational training and multi-media teaching and learning were also strongly encouraged. To improve teaching and learning, small-class teaching would be gradually implemented in kindergarten, primary and secondary. The subsidized seven- and ten-year educational scheme implemented in 1995 and 1997 (Governo de Macau, 1995; Governo de Macau, 1997) (<http://www.imprensa.macao.gov.mo>) respectively had been modified and replaced by the Decreto-Lei no. 9/2001/M (*ibid.*), which strongly recommended class size to be

reduced from the recommended 45 to between 35 and 45 students, starting from kindergarten age in September 2001. The amount of subsidy would be based on the number of students and would be proportionally reduced if student numbers were over the recommended number of 35 students per class. It was also planned that within three years all schools in Macau would have installed IT and multi-media teaching facilities. The aims of education were to train and cultivate young people who were good, energetic, and responsible, so that they could contribute to the society (http://www.al.gov.mo/cn/cn_news.htm).

2.2.8 *State-wide assessment*

Macau has no territory-wide standard examinations. Students only sit internal – schools-set – examinations, and standards vary, with schools issuing their own certificates. The small size of Macau renders this, perhaps, less of a problem, as there is ‘common knowledge’ of successful and less successful schools in Macau, though this is based on hearsay reputation and Universities’ entrance examination results only. External examinations come mostly in the form of overseas examinations such as GCE, GCSE, TOEFL, SAT and the Graded English test, but these are not widely used. A ‘public’ examination was brought in during 1990 by the University of Macau, open to whoever was interested in studying at the university. It was not intended to be a common assessment for the territory, but was a university entrance examination. There is no state-wide method for assessing teaching and learning effectiveness. There has never been any common monitoring or supervision in Macau of teaching and learning effectiveness for

all school subjects and the standards of school leavers, be they kindergarten, primary, secondary or university graduates.

2.2.9. English learning in Macau

English is a foreign language, taught in all schools in Macau. The importance of English is widely acknowledged in Macau, though it is not a second or official language. It is hoped that through English, Macau can establish an international status and build up its links globally (Jeong, 1993). Indeed, globalization, social progress and future developments require a multilingual elite as well as a literate general population (Jeong, 1992).

In Macau children start formal schooling at the age of 3, in kindergartens. Here they have exposure to, and formal teaching of, simple English vocabulary and sentences. Children of 1 year of age can be sent to nurseries where they will start learning the English alphabet and some very simple English expressions. To start teaching children English at such young age suggests the importance attached to English in Macau.

Starting from primary education, students are taught intensively English grammar and reading. Indeed students learn English at schools until they finish either F5 or F6. Altogether students will have learned English from between 13 and 15 years, when they leave secondary school. Further, English learning continues if students choose to further

their study in some local or overseas tertiary institutes, as the medium of instruction is often English.

Despite years of learning, students' standards of English and levels of achievement are low, and vary from school to school. This phenomenon is exemplified when F5 Macau students enroll into the Center for Pre-University Studies (CPU) of the University of Macau, to take up their F6 education.

All students who enroll in the Foundation Studies Program in the CPU have to take an English Placement Test. The Test streams students into five levels, elementary to advanced levels of English. The purpose is to place students into the appropriate level so that they can learn English more effectively.

Students placed into level 1 are very weak in all English skills. Their actual standard of English can even be lower than that of the elementary level. However, students who are at level 5 possess very advanced English language skills and some of them have passed GCE 'O' level English with a B or A grade or TOEFL with 550 or 600 marks. It is clear that this issue needs further exploration in order to find out what may have caused the existing situation, what the situation is, what the problems are, and how significant they are, and it is the intention of this thesis to investigate the effectiveness of English teaching, learning and achievements in Macau, with F5 students as the cut-off point, so that a clearer picture about English learning in Macau can be grasped, with the intention of providing possible suggestions to improve the current situation.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

It was set out in an earlier chapter that English language learning in Macau has considerable scope for improvement. This chapter will analyze the literature to identify some possible reasons for this by considering the status of English and the discussions about factors which influence the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in general. The purpose is to consider which factors might be at work in Macau and which of these need to be pursued in an analysis of the specific situation of Macau. Therefore, the thesis has chosen not to include the literature which provide a broad range of themes related to second language learning (SLA) (c.f. Mitchell and Myles, 1998; Richards and Rodgers, 2001), as this is not the focus of the thesis.

This literature review chapter looks at how English has become a world language, its subsequent effect on a school's curriculum and the expectations it carries for the learners, institutions and society. It is generally believed that a good command of English guarantees access to a better job, resulting in a better life. This applies to the national level in terms of doing business with the English-speaking world. However, this chapter reveals that English learning is not as successful as has been expected or hoped for, and it has not met the expectations that many people have for it.

The question is then why English should still be taught if it has not been successful. The answer is straightforward – itself being a world language, English learning as a foreign language (EFL) is an educational opportunity *per se*, thus it should remain in the curriculum. The chapter then points out that unsuccessful English learning does not reside solely with learning. Unsuccessful learning and teaching could be due to the operation of many factors, for example:

1. improper application of a curriculum model, ignoring students' needs, thus resulting in poor language learning;
2. ineffective assessments, thus affecting students' learning motivation;
3. ineffective application of teaching methodology;
4. negligence of student factors and their learning strategies for English learning;
5. exclusion of the cultural element when teaching English, resulting in low learning motivation and ineffective learning;
6. improper use and choice of English textbooks;
7. inefficient teacher training components to prepare non-native speakers to take up English teaching;
8. inappropriate reliance on the mother tongue (MT) for the teaching of English.

With reference to the literature concerning effective English teaching and learning, this chapter investigates how the above mentioned problems may be eliminated if they are handled differently. The intention of looking into these various issues is to establish a yardstick to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in

Macau. It is hoped that such a comparison may help to bring some insight into the existing English teaching practice so as to improve English teaching and learning, and the current curriculum planning in Macau. With better understanding and knowledge about the possibility of how to obtain more effective English teaching and learning, it may be possible to induce in local curriculum planners, policy makers, teachers, students and all the parties concerned a more effective approach about English learning so that English teaching and learning can become more successful in Macau. Furthermore, as there is no official or public exam to evaluate students' standard of English, though students start learning English at the age of three, it is also hoped that this comparison may help to establish some appropriate criteria to monitor the standard and effectiveness of English teaching and learning attained.

3.2. The need for English

3.2.1. English – the world language

English has obtained world importance. Brumfit (1982), Widdowson (1987), Pennycook (1994) and Crystal (1997) have put forward several explanations for this.

Firstly, it is *spoken* by many people in about seventy countries around the world; it is an official language in over a hundred countries, and it is a priority in many countries' foreign-language teaching, though it has no official status.

Secondly, economic developments operating *on a global scale*, and the growth of competitive industry and business at this scale, which has fostered the emergence of massive international organizations. As the world forges fresh networks of international alliances, it requires an unprecedented need for a *lingua franca*, and that results in English being the world language, as English is the most widespread medium of international communication in respect of both the large number and geographical spread of its speakers and non-native speakers who use it for international contact (Brumfit, 1982).

Thirdly, Swales (1993) has described the growth of regional and functional varieties of the language, and the personal and functional value of being able to communicate in English (p. 283). Burchfield (1986) even equates the negligence of English learning to linguistic deprivation, as English is the chief *lingua franca* of the Internet. Furthermore, when a country's *development* is defined (Abbott, 1992), English is involved because one significant aspect is in terms of advanced technology, modernisation and industrialisation through teaching an international language such as English.

English has become important, and English learning has thus become a priority in many situations and at schools. Does this result in successful English learning outcomes? The following section will illustrate that this expectation has not been met, though English is widely taught.

3.2.2 *The value of English learning*

Rogers (1982) points out that despite the enormous resources invested in the teaching of English, the results of English teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and most students fail to learn it well. Students are excluded from obtaining a better job which was promised by a knowledge of the language. What has also been ignored is the fact that only a small percentage of students actually need English in their future life. This contradiction between the rhetoric and the reality results in a love-hate relationship with a language which is resented yet whose great importance is acknowledged (Abbott, 1992: 173-175).

Rogers (1982: 145) questions the need for the teaching and learning of English, asking:

1. What is the significance of English language teaching (ELT) for the individual, especially the young learners?
2. Why go on teaching English if it is taught and learned badly?
3. Why are attempts made to teach English to so many students who are never going to need it?
4. Is it ethical to go on teaching English to so many children, and so encourage them to believe that it will entitle them to a 'better' life?

Abbott's (1984) and Prodromou's (1988) responses are: Firstly, the role for English in any country is a part of that country's national education policy in the face of its global

importance. English is an international language for as long as western culture, science and technology dominate the world market, and access to employment is partly due to a knowledge of English (Prodromou, 1988: 80). Secondly, though very few students are going to need to use English, it is impossible to predict which students will never need English, and it is unjustified to deprive pupils of learning because it is against the broad educational principle of equality of opportunity (*ibid.*). Thirdly, English learning provides an important educational opportunity as students can have access to a very different culture and other aspects of life. It is an educational subject in its broadest sense, bringing the freedom and critical thinking (Freire, 1972). Fourthly, many other subjects will not truly be 'needed' by most people in their daily lives on leaving school, but this should not downgrade their educational value, and we do not simply abolish a school subject merely because students fail to do it well (Promodou, 1988).

It is clear that English learning is important. It is the poor English learning achievement that has called for attention to teaching and course design in order to improve the situation (Abbott, 1992). To achieve better English teaching and learning, the first possible issue to look at is the curriculum, as it is often the first thing on which learning objectives, teaching content, assessments and teaching methods are based, and it is a major factor affecting language learning outcomes. Therefore, the next section will look at one of the most widely adopted curriculum models in schools – the Tylerian model.

3.3 Curriculum design and successful language learning

3.3.1. *The Tylerian approach*

Policy makers, educators and school authorities have an important role in designing and implementing a curriculum, though this can often lead to the criticism that such a curriculum does not derive from the point of view of learners. Krashen and Terrell (1983) argue that there is often a lack of precision in effective teaching and evaluation. However, the Tylerian objectives model (1949) sets out four operations for what a curriculum should be (p.1):

- What educational purposes should the teaching establishment seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
- How can we determine if these purposes are being attained?

The planning for a curriculum frequently begins with a discussion of objectives or purposes. It is believed that the pre-set objectives can subsequently reduce any diversification in interpretation. Once the objectives are set, it allows the selection of the most appropriate content and teaching strategies to achieve effective teaching and learning. Assessment can also take place more accurately and allow objectives to be modified in the face of unsatisfactory learning outcomes. It is also believed that learners' different learning abilities can be catered for in a systematic, objective approach within

various time limits. Learners will then know how to organize their efforts accordingly in order to achieve the stated objectives (Tyler, 1949).

The benefits of the objectives-based approach seem clear. Nonetheless, this approach, which focuses on what or how students will learn, has its criticism and shortcomings, especially when language learning is concerned (Krashen and Terrell, 1983; Littlejohn, 1985; el Nil el Fadil, 1985), for example, that it:

- restricts individual learner's needs and interests, as the specification of syllabuses is based on the needs analysis of a particular occupational or social category, and thus regards the learner as a member of the whole;
- does not allow much flexibility, as the syllabus is based on an analysis of the end-of-course achievements of the learner, allowing no room for other needs which might arise during the learning process;
- does not really allow learners' involvement in the management of their learning, as the teachers or syllabus designers have made all the decisions concerning what to learn and how to learn;
- is too behaviorist, and it is hard to observe much language behavior;
- is difficult to set a time limit, as language learning is a slow process enhanced by exposure to meaningful input in the target language.

The principle of this objectives-approach is closely related to the traditional belief about learning – being passive – with teacher being the provider and learners the receivers, who

are not expected to be involved in accepting responsibility for what and how to learn. Widdowson (1987) has suggested that, though the rights and obligations associated with the teacher and pupil roles are frequently clear, fixed and non-negotiable, such rigidity can impede the natural learning process, as learners' initiative is not taken into account. This can be very detrimental to effective learning and language learning (Naiman *et al.*, 1978).

3.3.2. *An alternative – the learner-centered approach*

When English learning is concerned, according to Littlejohn (1985), it is important to give students room to negotiate teaching content, goals, time and mode of learning – the learner-centered approach – which is a matter of methodology and assessment agreed between the teacher and learners, and where the outcome of learning will be of more interest to students (*ibid.*: 254-256; Prabhu, 1992). Such a concept demands a certain adjustment to both the roles and attitudes of the teacher and learners. The former will now take up the role of a facilitator who must leave learning to a certain extent in the hands of the learners, having discussed with them what and how to learn. To assure success. Here teacher training and in-service teacher training course should foster positive attitudes in teachers concerning individual learning. Also, a knowledge of students' learning strategies will also assist in more effective teaching and in designing classroom activities.

Here learners will regard learning as a personal pursuit, having been given the freedom to negotiate the scope of their learning and activities. They will then take more responsibility for themselves, under the teacher's guidance. They must also be helped to develop through tasks and materials the ability to choose what and how they need to study. Furthermore, the development of self-assessment is also important for students to assess their own progress, while obtaining the teacher's advice and assistance (*ibid.*: 260). Learners can become more the center of learning. A cooperation between teachers and learners will lead to a learner-centered approach. The question is whether it is possible to find out what students need and want.

Brindley (1989) suggests that for the success of any teaching approach (e.g. the learner-centered approach), and before purposes or goals of any programs are adopted, a certain prerequisite is important: a needs analysis. He supports the view that language programs should respond to learners' needs. This is the rationale behind learner-centered systems of language learning and it has become the principle of language program design (p. 63). The pity is that 'needs analysis' has often been neglected in the general English classroom (Seedhouse, 1995), though its role is fundamental to the planning and success of general English courses (Richards, 1990).

What is being suggested here is that the failure to adopt learner-centeredness, that itself is informed by a needs analysis, might result in an inappropriate curriculum, and so it is hardly surprising that students' achievements are poor.

The neglect of 'needs analysis' and learner-centeredness when planning a curriculum may account for poor English learning. What are the other factors that may have led this? As mentioned earlier, the pre-specification of objectives will help to select teaching content, teaching methods and assessment methods. Therefore, the next sections will look at these issues, their contribution to effective and ineffective English teaching and learning, and of what can be done to improve the situation.

3.4 Teaching methods, grammar learning and learning success

3.4.1 Impact of various teaching methods on English learning

Rutherford (1987) points out that the concept of foreign language learning being equivalent to grammar learning has been present for 2,500 years. Students are introduced systematically to the different aspects of grammar, from the easiest to the most complex. The centrality of grammar either as the content of language teaching or as the organizing principle for the development of curriculum and materials was not challenged until the mid-1970s. This is the consequence of the general belief that language rules can be taught and internalized through practice (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Therefore, some traditional teaching methods (grammar-translation, audio-lingualism, cognitive-code approach, direct method) (Richard-Amato, 1996; Lado, 1964; Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Carroll, 1967; Miller and Buckhout, 1973) have been widely practiced to achieve second language acquisition (SLA) through conscious rule learning.

It is argued that in terms of learning effectiveness, these four approaches are largely unsuccessful (Krashen, 1983; Van Patten, 1986). According to Krashen (*ibid.*) effective learning takes place through providing optimal and interesting input instead of focusing on grammar learning; as a remedy he proposes the communicative approach. The next section will look at the role of the communicative approach and the teaching of grammar and their contribution to learning success.

3.4.2 *The impact of grammar teaching on learning effectiveness*

The debate about the effectiveness of teaching grammar and the constraints of the classroom, with respect to having enough time and opportunity to teach in a communicative mode which imitates to some extent the processes of first language acquisition, has been long and is unfinished. Those in favour of some grammar teaching refer to the importance of saving time (Dodson, 1967; Wright, 1999), being efficient and systematic (Heafford, 1993; Brumfit, 1980a) and argue that focus on form is beneficial (Long, 1983; Spada, 1997). It is argued that the communicative approach can lead to pidginized forms of language (Higgs and Clifford, 1982). The conclusions drawn by Ellis (1994) in his review of language learning theories for example are that formal instruction is needed in advanced language learning.

There seems, then, to be a strong argument for a place for grammar teaching, provided that appropriate techniques are used, and one approach in recent times has been a focus

on forms and task-based learning (Willis, 1990; Ellis, 1994; Klapper, 1998; Seedhouse, 1999).

Further, if one wants learners to be more successful in their language learning, it is perhaps time to modify the traditional didactic language teaching methodology and combine it with the rationale and practice of newer methods such as the communicative and task-based approaches, though grammar is still an essential component. Of course, this poses significant organizational and resource problems, and places greater demands on teaching ability and innovation, and, therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that many teachers cannot handle the new ways of teaching.

3.5. Assessment and English learning

The previous section argued that EFL needs to take account of learners' needs, to promote a methodology which is a combination of focus on form and on meaning, and that some teaching of grammar is required. This section considers what modes of assessment could be used in order to work well together with these new concepts.

3.5.1 Types of assessments and learning success

Cohen *et al.* (2000) comment that tests and testing such as: (a) summative or achievement tests given at the end of teaching to assess what students have learned; b) criterion-referenced tests also given at the end of a course or unit to assess whether students have

acquired the skills so as to provide teachers with information of exactly what a student has learned; c) domain-referenced tests which intend to test students' knowledge of a particular subject or area, all have a long history and are applied to all areas of educational activities. However, reliance on assessment in terms of summative testing may not actually give a clear diagnostic picture concerning learning success and failure in terms of students' strengths, weaknesses and difficulties.

Furthermore, this kind of testing is very definite in terms of 'pass' and 'fail' is detrimental to learning morale and effectiveness, as confidence and motivation could be battered at the first attempt and subsequent tests. This sort of testing is inappropriate for language learning, as language is a skills-related ability which needs time to be built up. Therefore, more effective assessment, such as diagnostic and formative assessments, should be used, as they try to identify and analyze students' problems, strengths and weaknesses and develop remedial work or strategies to improve learning.

Cohen, *et al.* (1996) propose the ipsative type of assessment (meaning assessment by 'herself' or 'himself'), as this gives students a sense of ownership and can be less threatening than external and formal assessments. It also enhances self-engagement and motivation and is thus a more effective means of encouraging and improving language learning effectiveness (Harris, 1997). In the applications of these ideas to language learning, Oskarrson has argued that there are a number of advantages to self-assessment (1989: 3-5):

- promotion of learning;
- raised levels of awareness;
- improved goal-orientation;
- expansion of range of assessments;
- shared assessment burden;
- beneficial post-course effects.

This perspective is supported by others (Dickinson, 1988; Ellis and Sinclair, 1989; Tudor, 1996).

3.5.2 Self-assessment and learner training

As discussed earlier, the learner-centered approach differs from the teacher-centered approach in that there is active student involvement in terms of goal-setting and choice of methodology. Such participation calls for more reflection and personal investment, though taking responsibility for one's learning is comparatively uncommon (Tudor, 1996). To make such learning effective, it is argued that learners must develop their self-directive role through critical assessment of their current beliefs and attitudes about language learning, enhanced by the acquisition of learning techniques and linguistic knowledge (Tudor, 1996). According to Dickinson (1988) and Ellis and Sinclair (1989), learner training helps to develop such self-directive role and such training should consist of:

1. language learning and language learning processes;
2. language structure and language use;
3. the learners themselves as language learners – students are helped to reflect their role being the learners, taking their motivation, attitudes and willingness into account when learning the language.

Learner-training benefits teachers too as it provides them with a means to examine students' learning goals, their perceptions of these goals, their motivation for, and their beliefs and expectations about, language learning. It also provides a chance for sharing and exchanging insights and perceptions of the learning process, thus initiating the shared exploration of language learning between teachers and learners (Tudor, 1996: 37). Learner training should be an ongoing process as learners' competencies, goals and needs may change over time; different learning activities and input sources need to match learning.

3.6. Learner factors

3.6.1 Learners' impact on second language acquisition (SLA)

One important set of factors that affect SLA concerns learners. Though there are disagreements about the role of individual differences, differences in learning approaches, cognitive style, attitudes, age, personality, motivation, intelligence and aptitude, nevertheless they all influence the rate and success of SLA (Fillmore, 1979).

Ellis (1985) suggests that it is difficult to identify and classify the different individual factors. Qualities such as aptitude, motivation, anxiety, etc. are not directly observable. These are terms or labels for groups of behavior. Therefore, to attempt to look at how these differences affect SLA, it is perhaps useful to group them into (1) personal and (2) general factors. The former refers to how learning anxiety, peer influence, concepts of self, and attitudes towards the teacher and course materials can affect learning. The latter refers to how the learner's age, cognitive style, attitudes and motivation, intelligence and aptitude, and personality influence learning. The subsequent sections will indicate how these factors account for poor language learning and performance.

3.6.2 *Personal factors*

These are heterogeneous, but they can be grouped under three headings (*ibid.*):

a) Peer influence and group dynamics

Bailey (1983) records the anxiety and competitiveness experienced by students in the classroom. Some learners tend to compare themselves with other learners. Such comparisons can have debilitating or facilitating effects as the consequent anxiety can impair or enhance learning. Furthermore, some students compare themselves against their own expectations and progress. Influential also is the group, as group cohesiveness can have an adverse influence on learning when the learner's desire is based on collective rejection of pressure and acceptance of failure (McDonough, 1978).

b) Attitudes towards self, teachers and course materials

Heyde (1979) concluded that students with high self-esteem at all levels performed better in SLA. The relationship between self-esteem and performance can be bi-directional (Oller, 1981), that is, one may perform well because one's attitudes towards self is positive or *vice versa*. Another important facet of attitude is self-security (Stevick, 1976). He emphasizes that if an individual feels affirmative about his/her ability and self-worth, s/he will be better engaged in the sometimes frustrating and risk-taking process of acquiring an L2.

Different students may have very different expectations of teachers. Some students prefer to be given more space to pursue their own studies while others would prefer much more structured learning (Stevick, 1980). Pickett (1978) comments that successful SLA reveals a greater diversity in attitudes towards the role of the teacher: being the 'informant', logical, clear and systematic.

Learners also differ in their attitudes towards course materials. However, they prefer a variety of materials and the space to use them in ways they choose for themselves (McDonough, 1978). Again, the use of non-classroom materials can be a good source for students to expose themselves to this foreign language.

3.6.3 General factors

a) Age

Age is something more easily measured and described with reliability and precision (Stern, 1983), and empirical investigation shows that children are more effective language learners than adults, though a consensus agreement has not been reached on this (Ellis, 1985). However, with regard to L2 acquisition, Bongaerts *et al.*, (1997) and Ioup (1995) report that adult L2 learners can still attain native-like levels of proficiency in various domains, despite the delayed contact with L2. This indicates that more empirical researches may need to be conducted to find out a more satisfactory answer to this (Singleton, *et al.*, 1995). However, age is not the only relevant issue in accounting for L2 acquisition, another issue is when an L2 should be incorporated into the curriculum. This should depend on the value adhered to this L2 and the availability of qualified teaching force, appropriate materials, etc. (*ibid.*).

b) Intelligence and aptitude

Two types of intellectual abilities are required to learn a L2: intelligence and aptitude. The first can be called 'a general academic or reasoning ability' (Stern, 1983: 368), often referred to as intelligence. It basically means the ability to learn (McDonough, 1978) and it is needed for learning other academic subjects as well.

The second intellectual ability involves specific cognitive qualities needed for SLA, often termed 'aptitude'. Carroll and Sapon (1959) identify three major components: phonetic coding ability (the ability to differentiate sounds), grammatical sensitivity (ability to learn grammatical items and structures without too much difficulty) and inductive ability (ability to understand and analyse grammatical rules and explanations through examples and various contexts).

c) Cognitive style

This refers to the way in which students understand, conceptualise, organise and recall information (Ellis, 1985). Hawkey (1982) has identified various dimensions of cognitive style. Some students depend on people and context in order to learn while some can learn independently. The former will prove most facilitative in everyday and naturalistic SLA, as such learners will seek more contact with the language or native speakers in order to obtain more input, but the latter will result in greater success in classroom learning, as the greater ability to analyse the formal rules of the language is necessary in order to learn a L2.

d) Attitudes and motivation

The distinction between attitudes and motivation has not been always clear in SLA research. Schumann (1978) regards 'attitude' as a social factor and motivation as an affective factor. Stern (1983: 376-7) has identified three types of attitudes: (1) attitudes

towards the target language group; (2) attitudes towards learning the language; and (3) attitudes towards languages and language learning in general. Such attitudes are influenced by personality and the learning context. Richard-Amato (1996) also defines 'attitudes' as the set of beliefs that the learner has towards members of the target language group and also towards his/her own culture, such as peers, teachers, and classroom environment

The attitudes that an individual has towards the target language and the target group have an impact on students' motivation and success in acquiring the new language (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). Stauble (1980) and Schumann (1978) argue that successful SLA depends on the extent to which the learners acculturate themselves to the target language group. Gardner and Lambert (1972) define 'attitude' as the learner's persistence in striving for a goal and 'motivation' as the learner's overall goal or orientation. They also draw a basic distinction between an integrative and an instrumental orientation motivation to L2 learning. The former appears when the learner wants to identify with the culture of the L2 group. The latter occurs when the learner's goals for learning are functional. These two are actually orientations which arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals, either integrative or instrumental (Gardner *et al.*, 1976). Brown (1981) identifies three kinds of motivation: (1) a general orientation to the goal of learning a L2 – global motivation; (2) situational motivation, which varies according to learning situations; (3) task motivation. Motivation is a powerful factor in SLA, and it affects the rate and success of SLA. Exactly how it does so is not clear. It is not clear if

it is motivation that produces successful learning or vice versa (Lukmank, 1972; Oller, Hudson, and Liu, 1977).

e) Anxiety

Another important component inherent in students' personality affecting SLA has also been identified by Brown (1987) – anxiety. Whether the anxiety aids or hinders SLA depends on its degree. No anxiety at all might cause the person to be lazy, while a small amount might bring the individual to an optimal state of alertness. It appears that a reduced anxiety level is related to proficiency in the target language (Gardner, Smythe, Clement, and Gliksman, 1976). In an ESL classroom, the teacher and peers can create a reduced level of anxiety by providing a kind of friendly and supportive learning environment.

This section has suggested that failure to attend to factors such as individual differences, differences in cognitive style, attitudes, age, personality, motivation, intelligence and aptitude, etc. can provide an explanation for poor and differential student performance.

3.7 The impact of learning strategies on English learning

3.7.1 *Strategies and successful language learning*

Cohen (1990) comments that we frequently need coaching or formal training for learning, but, when learning a target language, we often have nobody to help us to learn more effectively, as it has been taken for granted that the language course, implicitly or explicitly, will provide guidelines on learning that language in the given circumstances, though it is not always the case. To improve language learning, it is important to look at learners' strategies as they hold the key to successful acquisition (*ibid.*: 4).

Rubin (1975) comments that a learner with natural ability and motivation but with little opportunity may have difficulty in acquiring a language. If opportunity is present, but there is little motivation or poor learning skills, then learning will be slow. By the same token, a person with a lot of natural ability and opportunity may not learn, due to lack of motivation (p. 20). Oxford (1990) points out that learning strategies, knowledge and belief about self and language learning are more effective in achieving successful L2 acquisition (p. 199). Another important point to consider is how learners process what they have been taught, despite the input that is available. Students' failures very often are the results of a lack of proper strategies. Therefore, it is important to find out more about the learning process through effective learning strategies (Ervin-Tripp, 1970).

An understanding and awareness of learner strategies may also provide valuable insights into the process of language learning for both teachers and pupils (Fleming and Walls, 1998). Learning strategies are usually consistent with students' learning styles, personalities and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, they can be adopted and modified through teachers, books, other language learners or through deliberate trial-and-error styles. Through direct instruction and introduction, students can use appropriate strategies, maintain them over time and transfer them to new tasks whenever possible. Teachers should try to identify effective strategies to suit the needs, cognitive styles and even cultural expectations of students, who need to experience various strategies so that they can work out the best ones for themselves (Richard-Amato, 1996: 499).

3.7.2 *Strategies and effective learners*

The qualities of an effective language learner have been summed up by Ellis (Rubin, 1975; Naiman *et al.*, 1978):

1. Possess a strong reason for learning the L2, which may reflect an integrative or an instrumental motivation, and develop a strong 'task motivation' so as to respond appropriately to various tasks;
2. Eliminate negative anxiety and inhibitions as a reaction to the group dynamics in the learning situation;
3. Be ready to utilise opportunities to obtain the target language input and to try out the language, despite the possibilities of error production;

4. Be ready to adapt to different learning conditions and to make maximum use of listening and responding to the L2 input, by focusing mainly on meaning;
5. Be ready to analyse, categorise and organise the incoming L2 input and monitor the output.

To achieve effective teaching and learning, learners should be helped to develop such strategies.

3.7.3 *Processing strategies*

Fleming and Walls (1998) have pointed out that effective language learners employ a range of processing strategies: cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective. Cognitive strategies refer to the procedure of receptively and productively manipulating language data, such as rehearsal, memorization and the use of deduction in language learning activities. Metacognitive strategies are 'higher order executive skills', which involve planning, monitoring and evaluating the learning process, while social/affective strategies involve learners in communicative interaction with other learners (O'Malley *et al.*, 1985). The development of cognitive, metacognitive and the social-affective dimensions of students can influence their language performance. Hence the neglect of these can account for poor student performance.

3.7.4 *Contextual factors*

Learner strategies also vary in other areas (Rubin, 1975: 24-26): (1) the *task* – some tasks may require rote memorization while others may require oral drill; (2) the *learning stage* – different strategies are employed at different points in time in the learning process; (3) the *age of the learner* – adults are better at guessing while children are better at adopting to new situations; (4) the *context* – techniques adopted will differ in different situations, whether the language is used for survival and communication or simply for academic purpose; (5) *individual styles* – different learners utilize different approaches to enhance the effectiveness of learning; (6) *cultural differences* in cognitive learning styles – some learning strategies may emphasize approximation, total comprehension and rote learning. Despite all these differences, the key to successful language learning is to find out what strategies, and cognitive processes learners use, so that students can be taught effective learning methods. The neglect of examining and utilizing a range of learning strategies in the key areas of language learning can lead to poor student performance.

3.8 **Culture and English learning**

3.8.1 *Culture and learning*

The aims of English language teaching have been defined since the first half of the 20th century as (Doye, 1999: 11):

- (1) linguistic competence – the ability to use and to understand the language;
- (2) competence in the four skills – speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Both emphases concerned the ability to produce and understand well-formed sentences. What was missing was the social dimension of the language, as language use and understanding depend on such conditions as setting, communicative intention, and the relationship between partners. Consequently, functional syllabuses (learning focusing on everyday speech) replaced the grammar focus. However, this approach, too, was inadequate, as the sole focus on speech acts ignored the fact that communication is embedded in the context of a particular culture and cannot be separated from it. In order to communicate, people need to understand at least part of the culture of which the language is a prominent part. Exclusion of the cultural element contributes to the failure of language learning (*ibid.*)

Hyde (1994) suggests that language is for communication, and Savile-Troike (1989) has listed three characteristics of the components of communication in language learning: (1) linguistic knowledge; (2) interaction skills; (3) cultural knowledge. However, language learning often only involves the verbal elements of a language, such as grammar and vocabulary (the first element of the above three components), while the social elements of the L2 are excluded. This is termed a sociolinguistic vacuum by Marcus and Slansky (1994); it is common for students to acquire verbal fluency without knowing how the target language is used in contexts other than the classroom. However, for a learner to

acquire communicative competency, s/he needs to have a good command of the written and spoken language, the cultural contexts of its use and of all its 'unwritten rules'.

Widdowson (1992) also remarks that language is used to express attitude, belief or social value. It is both a linguistic communication activity and a social action – social interaction, the negotiation of position, the exercise of influence and control and so on. It is also here that cross-cultural differences between languages and conflicts between languages arise. This can possibly explain why this component is frequently left untouched in language teaching. However, this omission can deprive students of a fuller knowledge of the subject that they are learning (p. 335).

Several authors argue that the relationship between language and culture is complex, and cannot be separated (Zizi, 1991; Buttjes and Byram, 1991; Fairclough, 1992). The pedagogical separation of language from culture cannot be justified (Doye, 1999).

3.8.2 Cultural awareness and language learning

Mughan (1998) and James and Garrett (1992) also point out that most linguists would agree that in order to apply language skills fruitfully and effectively, a knowledge of the cultural environment is important. Culture, it is argued, is ultimately best accessed through language. Such a symbiotic relationship between culture and language may therefore be a useful source of teaching content for linguists and may provide an

enrichment of language learning materials. If teachers can teach both language skills and cultural awareness and adaptability, they may enhance language learning.

The 'cultural background' aspect in language teaching has recently moved to the foreground, and it is the result of wider social, political and technological developments and increased mobility of people, which in turn, stem from modern communications, electronic media and international organizations (Mughan, 1998). English, being the medium of international communication at present, is utilized to mediate a whole range of cultural and cross-cultural concepts. This aspect, together with its international dimension, have taken up a more significant role in ELT. However, in examining the ELT approaches (e.g. grammar-translation, audio-lingual and communicative approaches) and materials (ELT textbooks), it is noticeable that limited attention has been paid to the meaning and the cultural or cross-cultural aspects of learning the language. Further, though various writers have diverse opinions about the learning of English as being an integration into the target group and their culture, English learning is still mainly form-focused and instrumental (Prodromou, 1992).

As EFL now concerns the development of both linguistic and communicative competence, teachers have to be prepared for this wider task through appropriate studies, and these studies consist of a whole range of attitudes, skills and knowledge that contribute to communicative competence at both personal and educational levels (Doye, 1999). At the personal level, teachers have to develop the appropriate communicative skills in the foreign language and other means of communication proper for negotiation,

both in intercultural settings and in the classroom. They should also acquire knowledge about the sociocultural situation of the target language communities or countries. At the educational level, teachers should know very well the overall aim of education and the specific linguistic and intercultural objectives, as well as the methods of selection, gradation and presentation of the contents of their teaching (*ibid.*).

3.9 The impact of ELT texts on syllabuses and teaching

3.9.1 Contribution of ELT textbooks

The contribution of textbooks must not be ignored (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994). Textbook developments seem to be in line with developments in language learning theory and changes in society (Scercu, 1998). Textbooks are useful for day-to-day classroom use as they provide the means for interaction between teachers, learners and materials and thus present useful opportunities for learning (Allwright, 1981), and as a framework guide (Torres, 1990). Wong-Fillmore (1985) also stresses that teaching effectiveness can be the result of clear and structured lesson formats. Textbooks that impose a structure on the interaction of the lesson can be potentially beneficial and favorable. Allwright and Bailey (1995) also point out that for interaction to be effectively managed by both teachers and learners, it is necessary to give everyone the best chance to learn the language through structured lessons presented in ELT textbooks. Appropriate, high quality textbooks can be an excellent vehicle for effective teaching when properly used for various reasons (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994: 323):

1. Structured textbooks can save teachers work, helping them to manage teaching more easily, and thus give them more time to concentrate on creative lesson planning, teaching, understanding the subject matter, adapting and supplementing materials;
2. Textbooks provide a very clear picture of the direction of the change taking place and its development, thus giving teachers clear teaching and planning directions;
3. Since the choice of a textbook frequently involves a joint decision, this is the apparent support that teachers need, as there are other people involved who are sharing responsibility for course matters.

Despite the advantages of ELT textbooks, the heavy reliance on them has drawn criticisms (Sercu, 1998: 2):

1. Are too rigid and unable to cater for the needs of all students;
2. fail to present the multiple sides of any issue or address timely and topical issues;
3. impose particular teaching and learning styles;
4. present highly fragmented pictures of both the target culture and people.

3.9.2 Moderating the dependence on ELT textbooks

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) point out that, though no textbook can ever meet all the needs of any individual teaching-learning situation or the needs of the individuals, being simply a workable compromise, it is possible, nevertheless, to find appropriate textbooks to suit learners' needs and contexts. This can be achieved by more informed, discerning

and influential consumers. Sheldon (1988) and Kast and Neuner (1994) suggest approaches to evaluation, though the evaluation can still be subjective, affected by local considerations and circumstances and even personal points of interest (Sercu, 1998), whereas Prabhu (1992) and Ellis (1997) argue that teachers should have sufficient theoretical understanding of textbooks to use and evaluate them efficiently.

This section has suggested that students might not be performing well if they use a range of different textbooks, several of which may be unsuitable, unstimulating and irrelevant, so that 'fitness for purpose' in raising students' achievement is not being well served. The misuse of textbooks and the use of poor textbooks can account for poor student performance.

3.10. Correlation between teacher training and English learning

3.10.1 Grammar components and teacher training

Kerr (1993: 42) comments that the study of the language system or the learning of a body of established facts about grammar with its aim to 'impart a large but paradoxically narrow and complex body of language knowledge to teacher trainees is an important component of most teacher training courses' (p. 42). This component is sometimes referred to as 'language awareness' (LA) or 'language analysis' by Hales (1997), and these two aspects of language training are inextricably linked. The former refers to a sensitivity to grammatical, lexical, or phonological features and the effect on meaning

brought about by the use of different forms; the latter refers to the process of identifying and examining linguistic features to check how they function, and from there deriving a reason for their use. Awareness is more a capacity and analysis is more an activity, and they are closely interrelated. Awareness improves the ability to identify linguistic features as a starting point, while analyzing language can develop awareness.

Wright and Bolitho (1993) remark that LA provides an essential link between teachers' knowledge of language and their teaching. This means that the more aware a teacher is of language and how it works, the better, as it helps the teacher to accomplish such tasks as preparing lessons, evaluating, adapting, understanding, interpreting, testing and assessing learners' performance, writing materials and designing a syllabus or curriculum. By seeing language in 'different' ways, teachers become more sensitive to what the linguistic knowledge base represents and thus enhance their teaching effectiveness.

Despite the claim for LA's contribution to teaching, Edge (1988a) suggests that both pre- and in-service training courses have failed to improve learners' grammar and teaching effectiveness, as an effective teacher's roles should include being a user and analyst, aside from having a language awareness. The emphasis on simply the reception of information and knowledge does not correspond with the current interactive and communicative practice in terms of English teaching and learning methodology and content, which place more emphasis on the learners' involvement, teacher's communicative proficiency and active learning (*ibid.*).

A language improvement component aimed at improving the language proficiency is often missing, yet it is important, as teachers need to be able to explain matters, give instructions, elicit ideas and suggestions from students and so on. This is a main concern for primary and secondary English teachers, so that they can use the language more fluently and more confidently in the classroom. In-service or pre-service teacher training courses which fail to take this into account fail to meet the needs or respond to the wishes of the teacher themselves (Cullen, 1994: 164). Lange (1990) and Murdoch (1994) point out that language proficiency will always represent the bedrock of teachers' professional confidence and it is the most essential characteristic of an effective teacher.

This section suggests that poor, inappropriate teacher training may contribute to poor student performance. Improving trainees' language proficiency is a priority.

3.10.2 Language improvement as a priority

A poor command of English jeopardizes the teacher's confidence in the classroom and can affect his/her self-esteem and professional status. Low levels of English among the teaching staff are both the concern of the teachers themselves and those involved in planning both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs (Doff, 1987). Cullen (1994) identified some general approaches which the course planner might adopt to improve the situation (p. 165-167):

1. Tackle the problem indirectly, e.g. all components of the program should be conducted in English, with more opportunities to contact English through discussion, reading and practicing micro-teaching;
2. Include a language improvement component in the course;
3. Link methodology and language improvement – make methodology the content of a language improvement program;
4. Make language improvement central – students will first have direct experience of certain teaching approaches or techniques on presenting the language, then they discuss their practicality and drawbacks, and then they decide what modifications are required. This resonates with Berry's (1990) suggestion that language improvement courses will have the secondary effect of providing a model of teaching behavior in addition to improving students' language. As Thomas (1990) puts it: 'it is necessary to re-evaluate the conventional distinction in teacher education between linguistic and pedagogic studies' (p. 36). It is time to think more in terms of activities that help to develop both pedagogic and language competencies (Murdoch, 1994).

Cullen suggests that there is a clear need and a desire for such courses in many parts of the world, to improve teachers' language proficiency (1994: 172). Neglect of such could offer an explanation for students' poor learning, as language proficiency can affect teaching performance.

3.10.3 Native versus non-native teachers of English

Non-native teachers' ineffective proficiency can cause them to have a sense of inferiority when compared to native-English speakers. It is perhaps unsurprising that native-speaking teachers are often given to a more prestigious status, as their linguistic knowledge is more highly regarded than pedagogic expertise. This can result in the perhaps mistaken belief that proficiency is the major factor that makes for an effective teacher: though native-speakers have more extensive experience as English language users, they can become closed off by complacency to the language and culture of other communities, which can reduce the possibility of the development of their expertise as an instructor.

Phillipson (1992) questions the assumption that the native speaker of English is intrinsically better qualified than the non-native because of greater facility in demonstrating fluent, idiomatically appropriate language, in appreciating the cultural connotations of the language, and in assessing whether a given language form is acceptably correct. The fact is that the untrained or unqualified native speaker of English is potentially a danger because of ignorance of the structure of the target language. A qualified English teacher, who has gone through the complex process of acquiring English as a second language or foreign language, has insight into the linguistic and cultural needs of learners, a detailed understanding of how mother tongue and the target language differ and what is difficult for learners, and first-hand experience of using a second or foreign language (pp. 14-15).

Edge (1988b) also provides support for non-native English teachers (p. 156):

as far as the teaching of English is concerned, it seems more and more important that proper teacher training and development should help us escape from the essentially nationalistic view of native speaker/non-native speaker and get us involved in furthering an internationalist perspective in which users of English are simply more or less accomplished communicators (Edge, 1988b: 156).

Edge suggests that all users of English are also learners of English and are simply at a more or less advanced degree of interlanguage (see also Selinker, 1972). Native speakers are in a more advantageous position here, as they were born and brought up in an English-speaking environment. Non-native speakers constantly move along the continuum of the learning process as they learn-to-use and use-to-learn English (Medgyes, 1992).

Medgyes (1992) suggests that non-native speakers of English may even have hidden advantages (*ibid.*: 340-347):

1. Non-native English teachers (NESTs) can serve as successful models of English learning, depending on the extent of their proficiency;
2. Non-NESTs can teach learning strategies more effectively as they have adopted those strategies during their own learning process;
3. Non-NESTs can provide learners with more linguistic information as they have gained abundant knowledge about and insight into how the English language works;

4. Non-NESTs can be in a better position to anticipate language difficulties and this enables them to help learners overcome language difficulties and to avoid pitfalls. This also depends on their experience;
5. Non-NESTs can be more empathetic to the needs and problems of the learners as they have gone through similar stages themselves;
6. Non-NESTs can benefit from sharing the learners' mother tongue and this can be effective in a monolingual setting as it facilitates the teaching/learning process.

Medgyes (*ibid.*) and Tajino and Tajino (2000) conclude that NESTs and non-NESTs can be equally effective and their strengths and weaknesses can balance out each other. Therefore, the question of 'who's worth more: a native or non-native?' does not always make sense. In a purely non-native context, it seems as though the more proficient one is in English, the more efficient that teacher will be in the classroom. Therefore, it is important for non-NESTs to improve their English proficiency, and they should also try to learn the vernacular of the host country.

What is being suggested here is not that having native or non-native teachers can account for poor and differential student performance, rather, it is the inappropriate use of native and non-native speakers in second language classrooms that can account for poor performance by students. Learners' needs can be served by both native and non-native speakers; it is, perhaps, when an inappropriate match occurs between learners' needs and native/non-native teachers' abilities, that poor student performance can result.

3.10.4 Trainees' receptivity to training and active participation

Palmer (1993) remarks that it is usually the intention of teacher training programs to lead to change and development in current classroom practice, but there is often a large gap between what actually happens, especially on an in-service course, and what subsequently happens in the classroom. Very often, the 'new' ideas are not successful as they have not been used by the teachers themselves, as such training is usually intensive, it allows trainers little opportunity to help teachers explore the implications that the innovation will have on their formerly-established classroom routines and behaviors, and thus how they will adapt it to their own contexts. Consequently, the full benefit of the in-service program cannot be obtained.

Palmer also suggests that it is often the case that the program is run using transmission and problem-solving approaches, with trainers being the knowers and problem-solvers and the students the receivers. Thus there may be little personal investment and commitment. However, if the program is run so that trainees bring up teaching problems and the other trainees propose solutions, they may become more involved in learning and committed to improvement. The trainer becomes more of a facilitator and a colleague, giving professional advice and comments. This thinking supports Cullen's suggestion of incorporating a language improvement component into the teaching content.

Further, the effectiveness of these approaches depends very much on the nature of the trainees, for example, whether they need the basic training such as knowledge and skills

to be able to teach or whether they are already experienced teachers who simply need further development so that they can experience the innovation, reflect on its possible impact on their own teaching, adapt the change to their own circumstances, and evaluate the possible benefits in the light of actual experience, as involving experienced teachers in such approaches may help them to modify their long established perceptions and styles of teaching (Palmer, 1993: 169-171).

It is clear that a symbiotic relationship must be established between language study, methodology and language improvement in order to enable teachers to understand the theoretical principles underlying particular teaching practices, to manipulate the target language when handling teaching and giving explanations and answering questions, to choose tasks and activities to generate interest in students, and to develop the appropriate behavior and attitudes towards teaching. It is also important that teachers should utilize self-study resources such as radio programs, video and TV programs like their students in order to raise and maintain their proficiency both during and after training in a less linguistically-rich environment (Murdoch, 1994: 255).

This section has suggested the need for course modification, language improvement and active involvement in teacher training programs for teachers to develop sufficient expertise to be able to raise students' levels of achievement.

3.11. Mother tongue and English learning

3.11.1 The reliance on MT – a dilemma

Should mother tongue (MT) be utilised in classroom teaching? Atkinson (1987) and Harbord (1992) remark that, as there is a lack of literature and neglect in teacher training about this issue, the use of MT has caused unease among experienced and inexperienced teachers of whether or not to use it. The reason why mother tongue is not recommended in class is due to the shift of emphasis in language learning, from the acquisition of language skills through systematic teaching of linguistic structures to the acquisition of communicative competence through continuous target language input (Corder, 1983). In the interests of the development of language competence, communication in the classroom should take place in English as much as possible (Harbord, 1992).

However, to use English completely in class may be difficult, as many non-native L2 teachers are not competent enough in conducting a class entirely in English and they are inadequately equipped with L2 strategies to make teaching comprehensible, thus causing incomprehension, resentment and demotivation. Even English-speaking teachers may not do better, as some do not have the proper training and qualification to teach, though they are using English in class. It is only a common belief that, since English is their mother tongue, they should be better in teaching it. In fact, their lessons could also be incomprehensible (Atkinson, 1987).

Atkinson (1987) expresses concern about excessive dependency on mother tongue, as it hinders second language acquisition. The idea of avoiding mother tongue in language teaching is associated with the objection to using the grammar/translation method, as both teachers and students can become too dependent on the MT. The question is how MT should be utilized in classroom setting.

3.11.2 MT- a natural resort

The use of the MT and translation has received different opinions. Del Mar *et al.*, (1982) remark that translation is a 'learner-preferred strategy' and students use it even without being encouraged. It is very common among beginners and pre-intermediate students. It is a humanistic approach as it allows students to say what they want, and then the teacher can encourage them to find a way of expressing their meaning in English or, if necessary, help out (Harold, 1992: 351). As Danchev (1982) puts it, it is a natural phenomenon and an inevitable part of second language acquisition, so methodology should work *with* this natural tendency rather than *against* it. There is a justification for its limited use in certain situations, and it is very useful, especially for L2 features that are so completely structurally different from those of the mother tongue. However, we must remind students of the danger of translating purely the forms at the expense of the total meaning (Danchev, 1982).

Moreover, MT should be used to provoke discussion and speculation, to develop clarity and flexibility of thinking, and to help us increase our own and our students' awareness

of the inevitable interaction between the mother tongue and the target language that naturally occurs during the process of language learning (Duff, 1989). Students come to class with a language system which is potentially available as a factor in the acquisition of a second language and they already know what its communicative functions and potentials are (Corder, 1983).

Furthermore, language acquisition is not an ordered list of structural items to be taught and learned, and it does not develop in a linear progression but as a movement along a dynamic continuum; change is the norm and it is a restructuring of processes – of replacement of rules, addition or loss of rules, simplification, borrowing (Bickerton, 1975). The outcome is the product of another linguistic system – interlanguage – a system that intermediates between the mother tongue and the target language. This view implies that the MT is the starting point for L2 acquisition and it proceeds by a series of restructuring of the MT or sequencing of approximate systems progressively to make it more similar to the target language. It is natural that the earlier stages of the interlanguage would be more MT-like than the later stages (Corder, 1983: 90).

3.11.3 A middle path

Butzkamm (1998) indicates that brief episodes of switching to the mother tongue can function as a learning aid to enhance communicative competence in the foreign language while English remains the working language. Code-switching should be restricted to beginners' classes when it is used 'properly, systematically, sparingly and unobtrusively';

it is a natural short cut, a quick and effective learning aid (Searle, 1969). The young developing bilingual makes skilful use of one language to improve competence in the other language, and bilingual techniques for the foreign language classroom have proved to be superior to monolingual techniques (Ishii *et al.*, 1979). The use of the mother tongue does have benefits: at early levels a ratio of about 5% native language to about 95% target language may be profitable (Atkinson, 1987: 242).

Wright (1999) comments that, with the new role of grammar in language teaching and learning, it is possible to introduce a grammar item or structure within a communicative context and to devise a series of communicative activities and exercises in the TL for the practice of that item – the task-based approach – with little reference to the MT. The MT can be used for the sake of clarity and unambiguous comprehension (Heafford, 1993).

Franklin's (1990) research found a preference for using MT by teachers, and it is the students' available resort (Hawkins, 1994). A balance needs to be struck between unjustified use of the mother tongue and necessary or desirable MT use (Wright, 1999: 37).

This section has suggested that the proper use of the MT can be very beneficial. Its benefits depend on how it is employed in class.

3.12 Conclusion

This review chapter has indicated why English is a world language, the value of learning it, and why English teaching and learning have not been successful, despite the importance and expectations that learners, institutions and society have for it. The chapter has also pinpointed the essential factors suggested by literature that could possibly explain teaching and learning ineffectiveness:

1. the improper application of a curriculum model which ignores students' needs and results in poor learning;
2. inappropriate assessments that affect students' learning motivation;
3. poor student motivation;
4. ineffective teaching methodology;
5. neglect of student factors and the learning strategies they use for learning English;
6. neglect of teacher-related factors in English teaching;
7. the exclusion of English culture when it is being taught, resulting in low learning motivation and ineffective learning;
8. improper use and choice of English textbooks;
9. insufficient and inappropriate teacher training;
10. problems of native and non-native English speakers; and
11. inappropriate reliance on the native language to teach English.

The purpose of examining all these issues – the importance of English, the value of learning it, the failure in learning it, and how learning can be improved – is to establish a framework to investigate the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau. English learning has been found to be ineffective by the CPU students' placement test results. This study seeks to discover if the ineffectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau is related to the above eleven factors suggested by the literature, so that a comparison can be made between the actual situation in Macau and what the literature has claimed.

In order to compare the local situation with the literature, data on teachers' views were collected on the following issues that are closely related to the success of English teaching and learning in Macau:

1. the importance and purposes of English learning in Macau;
2. the effectiveness of English teaching and learning;
3. students' achievements and standards;
4. the English curriculum;
5. student factors (motivation and learning strategies);
6. teacher factors (training, experience, expertise, native/non-native speakers of English);
7. English textbooks;
8. means of assessments;
9. organizational factors (time-tabling, streaming, mixed-ability teaching and class size);

10. the role of English culture in English teaching and learning;
11. the impact of using Cantonese in English lessons;
12. the impact of the local society on English teaching and learning;
13. ways of improving the situation.

Data collected are used to investigate how these thirteen factors might have contributed to the current situation in Macau, comparing it to the literature.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. Aims and purposes of the research

This research intends to measure the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau with reference to the ideal type of English language teaching and learning recommended by the literature. The purpose of this comparison is to ascertain the impact of various factors on learning effectiveness in Macau, so that improvements can be made. The empirical research uses *perception-based* data from teachers in Macau.

4.2. Research questions

According to the literature search, the success of English teaching and learning is related to:

1. the choice of a curriculum model which includes students' language needs, learning motives, learners' factors and learning strategies;
2. the effectiveness of teaching methodology and assessment on motivating students and improving language learning;
3. the incorporation of the target language culture into learning so that L2 learning becomes more context-based and thus induces greater learning motivation;

4. the proper choice and use of ELT textbooks to make L2 learning more interesting and motivating;
5. efficient and proficient L2 teachers, either non-native or native English speaking;
6. the provision of pre- and in-service teacher training for L2 teachers to upgrade them on both language efficiency and teaching efficiency;
7. the moderate use of the mother tongue to improve English learning.

Several research questions flow from this list of factors, which become the focus of this study:

- (i) What curriculum-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (ii) What teacher-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (iii) What student-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (iv) What factors relating to teaching methodology affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (v) What society-related factors in Macau affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (vi) What school-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?

- (vii) What methodology and assessment-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?
- (viii) What language-related factors (e.g. use of mother tongue) affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?

To operationalize this study, these research questions are then translated into several practical questions, as follows:

1. What do teachers and students see as the purposes of English language teaching and learning?
2. What effects does teacher experience have on student achievement in English language?
3. What effects does teacher expertise have on student achievement in English language?
4. What effects does teacher qualification have on student achievement in English language?
5. What effects do student-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?
6. What effects do curriculum-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?

7. What effects do textbook-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?
8. What effects do teaching methodology-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?
9. What effects do learning strategy-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?
10. What effects do methodology and assessment-related factors have on student achievement in English learning?
11. What effects do the local culture and society, and the target culture and society, have on student achievement in English learning?
12. What part does mother tongue play in English teaching and learning?
13. What is the significance of motivation in English language teaching, learning and achievement?
14. What effects do organizational factors have on student achievement in English learning?

The match of research questions and operationalized questions is set out in Table 4.1 (major question numbers in the 'operationalized question numbers' column are contained outside parentheses, whilst those in parentheses refer to those operationalized questions which cover the research question to a lesser extent).

Not only is each research question addressed by several operationalized questions, but each operationalized question serves more than one research question. These factors

were considered, from the literature search, to be the most significant elements in teaching and learning of English.

Table 4.1: Matching the research questions with the operationalized questions

Research Question Number	Operationalized Question Number
(i)	6, 7 (8, 9, 10, 12)
(ii)	1, 2, 3, 4, 13 (8, 9, 10, 12)
(iii)	1, 5, 9, 13 (11, 12)
(iv)	7, 8, 9, 13 (3, 6, 10, 12)
(v)	1, 11 (12)
(vi)	1, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14
(vii)	10, (5, 8, 9, 13)
(viii)	11, 12 (1)

4.3. Constraints on the research

It would have been ideal to have interviewed all English teachers in Macau and to have had them complete questionnaires. However, the exercise would have been too big. Time was also a significant constraint, as the English teachers did not have much time to spend on interviews and questionnaires. The task, then, was to conduct an investigation that addressed the scope of the whole field within these constraints. This was addressed by the research items and the sampling strategy used (discussed below).

4.4. Ethical issues and the ownership of research

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) emphasize that it is important for the researcher to ensure informed consent from the researched before conducting either the interview or the questionnaires. Permission was obtained from the principals of the

schools involved for the teachers to be approached. Participants in this study had complete freedom to accept or decline to be interviewed or to complete the questionnaire, having been informed about the purpose, nature and procedures of the research, and they could participate or withdraw from the investigation at any time (see Appendix A for the letters of consent). It was made clear that the source of the data would remain strictly anonymous, non-traceable and confidential so that no harm could come to the respondents (the issue of non-maleficence) (*ibid.*). Data were only to be utilized for the thesis, and the raw data, interview tapes and questionnaires would be destroyed on completion of the thesis. Further, the participants would be able to request a copy of the research report, and a copy of the thesis would be kept in the local public library.

The data were to become the property of the researcher once they had been given to the researcher; respondent validation was available on request for the interviews, though, as they were intended to generate response categories and items as well as actual data, it was not envisaged that respondent validation would be requested. It was pointed out to participants that the results of the research could lead to the improvement of English language teaching in Macau, i.e. that a *collective* benefit might be brought to Macau teachers and learners (the issue of beneficence) (Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

4.5. The methodology of the research

The *perception-based* study of factors which affect teaching and learning was undertaken by eliciting teachers' views of effective teaching and learning and their comments on the

issues which were identified in the literature review. Clearly, if the study were simply perception-based, then it might be open to questions of reliability (e.g. teachers' stated perceptions may be ill-informed, prejudiced, incomplete, inaccurate, or simply wrong). However, if these problems of reliability (discussed below) could be minimized, then a perception-based study would be 'strong on reality', particularly if the sample included 'knowledgeable people', i.e. those who were informed about the matters under review. The strengths of the perception-based study are great if reliability can be ensured; this was also addressed through the careful sampling strategies, discussed below.

Some key features of the research methodology were:

1. a literature review to generate characteristics of effective teaching and learning of English;
2. interviews with teachers to *generate* key issues in, and views of, effective teaching and learning of English in Macau;
3. interviews with teachers (the same interviews as in (2)) to gather their perceptions of issues in the teaching and learning of English in Macau as generated by the literature;
4. interviews with teachers (the same interviews as in (2)) to generate issues in, and response categories for, English language teaching and learning in Macau to be addressed in a questionnaire; this questionnaire, when administered to a sample would then provide data for analyzing their perceptions of the research population;

5. questionnaires constructed from both literature-derived issues and interviewee-derived issues.

The interviews served more than one purpose. They fed into the questionnaires, and they also provided data that were independent of the questionnaires. For this reason, careful piloting of the interviews was undertaken (discussed below).

As the purpose of this research was to collect a range of perspectives on English teaching and learning from the English teachers in Macau, and to make generalizations about the overall picture in Macau, a survey was considered to be appropriate, as it enabled the research to collect large-scale reliable data to find out the overall situation of English teaching and learning effectiveness in Macau (Wilson and McLean, 1994). The data analysis could then give a fair, full, genuine and authentic picture of English teaching and learning in Macau. The survey method was chosen on the criterion of 'fitness for purpose' (Cohen *et al.*, 2000) – the purpose was to establish an overall picture rather than the fine detail that might be yielded by, for example, ethnographic approaches.

In order to generate the questionnaire items and to gain as full a set of possible responses as possible, in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted. The questionnaire items were derived from a combination of the literature search and interviewees' views and items. This ensured construct validity to the research.

A combination of semi-structured – qualitative – interviews and a structured, multiple choice questionnaire, together sought to establish a full and rounded picture of the overall situation in Macau, i.e. to address construct, concurrent and content validity (discussed below). To further the reliability and validity of the research, two research tools were utilized rather than relying on a single instrument approach, viz. semi-structured interviews and a closed questionnaire with rating scales. Using triangulation by instruments, perspectives and methodologies enabled a more holistic, reliable and valid view of the situation under investigation to be gained (Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

4.6. Research instruments

4.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a useful and flexible means of gathering in-depth or unanticipated information from respondents (Kvale, 1996). It can collect specific insights, critical comments and a richness of data, as it gives respondents the opportunity to answer the questions in their own words. This has significant potential for an honest and authentic response (Kerlinger, 1970). The researcher also had a list of *prompts* and *probes* for the interviews (Oppenheim, 1992). The prompts were to help to clarify the questions, while the probes were to help the researcher ask for elaboration on the topics (Whyte, 1982), to seek explanation of issues and to generate the fullest possible range of questionnaire items and response categories, thereby establishing the richness, depth, fullness, comprehensiveness and honesty of responses from the respondents (Oppenheim, 1992).

In a semi-structured interview, the issues and topics are the same for all the respondents; however, the sequence and phraseology of the questions may vary by respondent according to the natural flow of the discussion (Patton, 1980; Oppenheim, 1992). This may risk losing the consistency of the interview data when they are being compared, as the change of wording of an interview may also change the meaning of the questions when they are interpreted by the respondents. Nevertheless, the justification for using different words for individual interviews was that they were designed to give the researcher the chance to elicit the richest, most honest, deep and authentic data from the respondents (Oppenheim, 1992).

The semi-structured interviews were piloted before being conducted with twelve English teachers teaching at various levels in various schools in Macau (i.e. primary 1 to secondary 5), to check whether the interview questions were properly worded, comprehensive, relevant and clear, so that improvements could be made to the question type (see Appendix B for the original interview questions). The piloting was undertaken with two very experienced English teachers in Macau, as it was hoped that their teaching experience and insight would be able to help to improve the interview items which, in turn, would be used (in part) to generate categories for the questionnaire responses, through open-ended questions. As the final version of the interviews was also used to generate categories and issues for the questionnaire, these interviews could be considered, in a sense, as a pilot to the questionnaire. The questionnaire itself was piloted with five experienced school teachers of English.

A letter of request was sent to all the interviewees to obtain their informed consent (Appendix A), both for the two pilot interviewees and the twelve teachers who would be part of the main interviews, and here it was made clear that both the school and teacher would remain anonymous. In advance of the interviews, the interviewees were sent a copy of the questions, so that they could prepare for the interview, and to put them at ease before the interview (Spradley, 1979).

The interviews were recorded on audio-cassette and written notes were taken during them, to enable the researcher to recall and comment on all of the verbal and non-verbal communication and to prevent the loss of data during transcription (Mishler, 1991). However, as some interviewees might find this threatening because their actual words were being recorded, it was made clear to them that the interview tape and data would be destroyed after the completion of the data analysis and thesis, and that the source of the interviewee and data remained absolutely untraceable, anonymous and confidential. Note-taking was reduced to a minimum as the loss of eye contact while taking notes could disrupt the natural flow of the interviews and the interviewees might find it off-putting (Merton *et al.*, 1956). Note-taking was employed when some answers given by the interviewee were particularly enlightening or when the interviewees' reactions were considered unusual. This could act as reminders of these occasions when doing the transcription. Using recording and occasional note-taking enhanced the transcription process later, and consolidated the truthfulness and 'dependability' of the interview data

(Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). The pilot interview questions (Appendix B) were related to the research questions as follows (table 4.2):

Table 4.2: The relationship between the research questions and pilot interview questions

Number of the Operationalized Research Question	Number of the Interview Question	Issues investigated that affect learning effectiveness
1	2	The purposes of learning
2	9	Teachers' experience
3 & 4	5	Teachers' expertise and qualification
5	8	Student-related factors
6	11	Curriculum-related factors
7	12	Text-book related factors
8	6	Methodology-related factors
9	8	Learning strategy-related factors
10	14	Assessment-related factors
11	15	Culturally-related factors
12	10	Mother-tongue
13	13	Motivation

Additional questions (numbers 1, 3, 4, 7 and 16) were also included to obtain more data concerning the effectiveness of English teaching and learning.

After the pilot interviews, amendments were made to the original interview schedule (see Appendix C for the revised interview schedule). The order of some of the questions was re-arranged to create a better link between them. Several questions were added after the pilot interviews as it was recognized that: (a) views and data on these issues should also be obtained from the interviewees (e.g. about operationalized research question 14); (b) a

limited number of 'warm-up' questions should be included (i.e. questions designed to introduce the field and to put the respondents at their ease). Table 4.3 below shows the relationship between the original research and new interview schedule questions.

Table 4.3: The relationship between the research and revised interview questions

Number of the Operationalized Research Question	Number of the Interview Question	Issues investigated that affect learning effectiveness
1	5	The purposes of learning English
2	1, 2, 3, 12	Teachers' experience
3 & 4	8	Teachers' expertise and qualification
5	11	Student-related factors
6	13	Curriculum-related factors
7	16	Text-book related factors
8	9, 12	Methodology-related factors
9	14, 15	Learning strategy-related factors
10	18, 19	Assessment-related factors
11	23, 24, 25	Culturally-related factors
12	21	Mother-tongue
13	17	Motivation
14	20	Organizational factors

Additional questions (numbers 4, 6, 7, 10, 20, 22, 26-31) were included to obtain more data concerning the effectiveness of English teaching and learning and to obtain more response categories for the questionnaire.

4.6.2. The questionnaire

A closed questionnaire (see Appendix D) was used for the collection of large-scale data (Oppenheim, 1992; Wilson and McLean, 1994). The questionnaire items and responses

derived from both the literature on successful English teaching and learning, and the interviews. Table 4.4 shows the relationship between the research questions and the sections of the questionnaire.

Table 4.4: The relationship between the research questions and the questionnaire

Number of the Operationalized Research Question	Section of the Questionnaire	Issues investigated that affect learning effectiveness
1	D	The purposes of learning English
2	A3, A4, A6, A7, A 12, B, C, F	Teachers' experience
3 & 4	A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, B, C, F	Teachers' expertise and qualification
5	B, C, E	Student-related factors
6	B, C, G	Curriculum-related factors
7	B, C, F2(q), F8, G1(r), G1(s), H1(f), J2(d)	Text-book related factors
8	B, C, F2, F6, F8, G1(e), G1(f), G1(k)-(n), G1(s), H1(b)-(d), M (b)-(g)	Methodology-related factors
9	B, C, E1(a), E1(h) E1(p)-(r), E1(v), E2-4, F2(k)-(q), E2(w), F6, F8, G1(e), G1(f), G1(k)-(n), G1(s), H1(e), I3(b), I4(e), I4(f), iI4(k), I4(n), I4(o), M(d), M(f), M(g)	Learning strategy-related factors
10	B, C, E1(v), G1(p), I, M(i)	Assessment-related factors
11	B, C, E1(d), I3(h), K, L	Culturally-related factors
12	A8, B, C, F2(u), J, M(k), M(p), M(q)	Mother-tongue
13	B, C, D, E, I2(h), I2(i), M(e)	Motivation
14	A9, A11, A13-15, B, C, E1(c), H, M(k), M(l), M(o)-(q)	Organizational factors

Sections B and C figure highly in the table because they ask for perceptions of levels of achievement. Indeed one purpose of the study is to see how students' achievement (addressed in sections B and C) relates to factors identified in the other sections. It was

made clear to participants that responses were to be referred to Form 5 students, as this was the focus of the study (see references in the questionnaire).

A series of closed questions was devised with instructions given to the respondents on how to complete the questionnaire (Cohen *et al.*, 2000), and the purposes of the questionnaire were clearly stated. Rating-scale type responses were provided for all questions, as they gave respondents the opportunity for a flexible response while enabling statistical data collected to be gathered (Oppenheim, 1992). This enabled the research to fuse measurement and opinion, quantity and quality. A letter of request for filling in the questionnaire was sent to the principals of the sample schools, before contacting the principals in person (see Appendix A for the letter of consent). The questionnaires were delivered and collected by the researcher to ensure as high a response rate as possible.

The drawback of a questionnaire is that different respondents may interpret the same words differently and this might affect the choice of responses. This could be minimized to a certain extent by providing 'anchor statements' such as 'strongly agree', 'agree', etc. (Morrison, 1993). This problem of ambiguity in words is expected to be *reduced* rather than *eliminated* (ibid.), and the piloting of the questionnaire was designed to reduce such ambiguity. The questionnaire items were piloted with five English teachers with teaching experience between five and fifteen years (discussed later).

4.7. Sampling

There are 92 registered schools in Macau (Education and Youth Department, 2000), 88 of them providing education to about 100,000 students (Statistics Department, 2000). They can be placed into three main categories: Chinese-based schools (private, non-religious schools); private religious schools; and government schools. In order to obtain a sample that would help to generate more response categories and items for the questionnaire, samples for the pilot interviews were chosen using purposive sampling.

With regard to the interviews themselves, it was decided to select teachers teaching in the middle-range schools – schools that were neither at the top nor the bottom in terms of students' performance in English. It might have been unwise to choose the 'top' schools, as their students were high-achievers in many subjects and English, being in prestigious schools, and their English proficiency might not have represented the situation in Macau. It was considered unwise to choose the 'bottom' schools, as students in these schools were generally poor in many subjects and again their English proficiency may not have reflected fully the situation in Macau. It was assumed that students in the 'middle-range' schools would provide a more balanced picture of the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau. Most schools in Macau belonged to that range, and thus the interview data would represent the general English performance in Macau.

There is a problem here, in that objective evidence of high, medium and low performing schools did not exist, there being no state-wide assessment system in Macau (Tang and

Morrison, 1998). To some extent the university entrance examination could be used to identify high performing schools, but, as these only cater for a section of the population, they were removed from the sample schools; similarly students in poorer parts of Macau were also removed from the sample – there being a putative link between poorer catchment areas and low school achievement. It must be acknowledged, however, that in the absence of publicly available evidence on student achievement (none exists (Tang and Morrison, 1998)), the researcher's own informed experience and knowledge of schools in Macau (over 15 years of experience) had to be the final arbiter of which schools, at the top and bottom of the performance scales, to exclude. At best this was informed hearsay evidence and local informal knowledge (this is not necessarily a drawback, given the very small size of Macau – a geographical area of less than 24 square kilometres).

Teachers for the interviews were drawn from primary 1 (age 6), 6 (age 12), form 3 (age 15) and form 5 (age 17). Formal English teaching and learning last from primary 1 to form 5 or form 6, depending on the system in the school. It was considered important to interview teachers of these levels as they would be able to offer perspectives and views on students' English language performance, for the following reasons:

Primary 1 is a crucial stage, as students start learning vocabulary and grammar in the foundation years.

Primary 6 is the last year in the primary school, and, after six years of learning, students should have learnt a lot of English.

The issue might be raised of the extent to which primary teachers would know about Form 5 students in secondary education. However, such teachers were included because the research sought to discover from them whether the problems experienced at Form 5 had already commenced at the primary level.

Form 3 is the last year in the junior high. Students should be more mature physically, mentally and in terms of their subject knowledge. It was thus decided that interview data should be obtained from experienced teachers teaching this level.

Form 5 is the same level of entry requirement for CPU students (the students who were the starting point for this study), so it was important to identify their standard.

In order to acquire reliable data from the different levels, three teachers from each of the levels from the three types of school were interviewed, the total being 12 teachers (table 4.5).

Table 4.5: The number of teachers used for the interviews, related to school type

Types of schools	Primary 1	Primary 6	Form 3	Form 5
Private religious	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher
Private non-religious	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher
Government	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher	1 teacher

With regard to the questionnaire, the number of schools to be taken from the three categories utilized a proportionate stratified random sampling method (Morrison, 1993; Cohen *et al.* 2000), derived by following the stages set out below (table 6). This would keep a proportion of the three types of schools in Macau and every school in each

category would have a chance to be selected. This enabled the data to be representative of the situation of English teaching and learning in Macau.

Table 4.6: The sampling frame for the questionnaire

1999–2000	Number of schools and percentage	Approximate ratio of total sample of number of all schools (numbers rounded) HCF = 2	Approximate ratio of sub-samples of all schools (private, government, Chinese-based, special) minus special schools (numbers rounded) HCF = 6
Private religious: Primary	16 (17.4%)	8	3
Private religious: Primary & Secondary ('all-through')	23 (25%)	12	4
<i>Total N = 39</i>	<i>39 (42.4%)</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>7</i>
Government: Primary	10 (10.9%)	5	2
Government: Secondary	2 (2.2%)	1	1
Government: Kindergarten	6 (6.5%)	3	
<i>Total N = 18</i>	<i>18 (19.6%)</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>3</i>
Private non-religious: Primary	14 (15.2%)	7	3
Private non-religious: Secondary and Secondary /Primary ('all-through')	17 (18.5%)	9	3
<i>Total N = 31</i>	<i>31 (33.7%)</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>6</i>
Special schools	4 (4.3%)	2	
<i>Total N = 4</i>	<i>4 (4.3%)</i>	<i>2</i>	
Grand Total N = 92	92 (100%)	47	
<i>Total minus special schools N = 88</i>	<i>88 (95.7%)</i>		<i>16</i>

Stage 1: There were 92 schools in Macau (table 4.6); four of them provided special education and English here was not a major school subject. These four schools exerted a disproportionate influence on the sample, reducing the highest common factor (HCF) to 2, thereby making for very large overall samples of schools (47 schools – column 3 of table 4.6). By taking out these four schools, the HCF from the total to be sampled

became approximately 6, calculated by finding the HCF of 42.4%, 19.6% and 33.7% in column 2, making the sample size much smaller and more manageable without the loss of validity and reliability with relation to schools that taught English, i.e. moving from 47 schools (had the four special schools been included) to only 16 schools after they were excluded. The percentaged numbers (42.14%, 19.6% and 33.7%) were not *exact* multiples of 6, but they were felt to be so close as not to constitute a problem.

Stage 2: The 88 schools sampled in Macau were divided into three categories: private religious, private non-religious and government schools. Probability stratified random sampling was utilized, so that all schools in each category would have the chance to be chosen to complete the questionnaire and so that generalizability would be possible – an important purpose of the research. Exactly 50 per cent of all the schools were solely primary (incorporating kindergarten) and the other 50 per cent of schools were either solely secondary or ‘all-through’ schools, i.e. schools with primary and secondary departments in the same school. For the sample, primary schools were either solely primary schools or primary departments in ‘all-through’ schools; secondary schools were either solely secondary schools or secondary departments in ‘all-through’ schools.

Stage 3: A sample using the same proportion of kinds of schools was taken from each category to ensure that a representative picture was obtained. This was done by rounding the numbers to the nearest whole number.

Stage 4: The number of schools to feature in the sample was calculated by finding the highest common factor (6) of the cells in column 2. The total number of schools came to 16, i.e. $7+3+6 = 16$ schools (see column 4). In order to keep the proportions within each overall category as close as feasible, the exact number of schools in each overall category shown in column four was calculated as follows:

- (a) the number of schools in the category 'private religious: primary' (16) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of private religious schools (39), which yielded a figure of 0.41, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (7) to give a figure (2.87) which was rounded to the nearest whole number for that category (3), hence 3 schools were chosen;
- (b) the number of schools in the category 'private religious: secondary and primary' (23) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of private religious schools (39), which yielded a figure of 0.59, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (7) to give a figure (4.13) which was rounded to the nearest whole number for that category (4); in this case it was ensured that secondary departments only of 'all-through schools' were contacted. Private religious solely secondary schools do not exist in Macau; hence 4 schools were chosen;

- (c) the number of schools in the category 'government: primary' (10) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of government schools (18), which yielded a figure of 0.55, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (3) to give a figure (1.67) which was rounded to the nearest whole number for that category (2), hence 2 schools were chosen. It can be observed that, as primary and secondary schools/departments were to be included in the sample, kindergarten schools were excluded;
- (d) the number of schools in the category 'government: secondary' (2) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of government schools (18), which yielded a figure of 0.11, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (3) to give a figure (3.33) which was rounded up to the nearest whole number for that category (1), hence one school was chosen;
- (e) the number of schools in the category 'private non-religious: primary' (14) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of private non-religious schools (31), which yielded a figure of 0.45, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (6) to give a figure (2.71) which was rounded to the nearest whole number for that category (3), hence 3 schools were chosen;

- (f) the number of schools in the category 'private non-religious: secondary and primary' (17) was calculated as a decimal fraction of the total number of private non-religious schools (31), which yielded a figure of 0.55, which was then multiplied by the total number of schools required in that category (6) to give a figure (3.3) which was rounded to the nearest whole number for that category (3); in this case it was ensured that secondary departments only of 'all-through schools' were contacted, hence 3 schools were chosen.

Summarizing the proportionate stratified sample for the questionnaire, the complete set of schools being shown in table 4.6 was:

- 3 private religious primary schools or primary departments of 'all-through' schools;
- 4 private religious secondary schools or secondary departments of 'all-through' schools;
- 2 government primary schools;
- 1 government secondary school;
- 3 private non-religious primary schools or primary departments of 'all-through' schools;
- 3 private non-religious secondary schools or secondary departments in 'all-through' schools.

In order to find the number of teachers to be involved in the questionnaire the randomly chosen schools in each category were contacted to ascertain the number of teachers of English, and then this number of questionnaires was distributed to them. The numbers are shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Schools and teachers sampled for the questionnaire

Types of schools	Number of schools from each category	Number of teachers
Private religious	School 1	4
	School 2	10
	School 3	11
	School 4	8
	School 5	7
	School 6	8
	School 7	9
Government	School 8	1
	School 9	7
	School 10	1
Private non-religious	School 11	13
	School 12	16
	School 13	5
	School 14	5
	School 15	6
	School 16	2
Total (Number)	N= 16	113

4.8. Piloting

The semi-structured interview was piloted with two very experienced English teachers for several purposes (Oppenheim, 1992; Morrison, 1993; Cohen *et al.* 2000), to:

- check the clarity of the interview questions;
- eliminate ambiguities, uncertainty, and poor wording of the questions;

- gain feedback on the types of questions to be asked in the interviews;
- generate categories for responses in the rating-scale choices for the questionnaire;
- generate items for further exploration;
- gain feedback on timing, coverage of scope;
- identify redundant and irrelevant questions;
- identify how motivating, threatening, non-engaging, intrusive, offensive items were;
- identify sensitive topics and problems in conducting interviews;
- gain feedback on leading questions;
- identify questions which were too easy, difficult, complex and remote from experience.

The questionnaire items were piloted with five experienced English teachers. The purposes of the pilot (Oppenheim, 1992, Cohen *et al.* 2000) were to:

- check clarity of items/layout/sections/presentation/instructions;
- gain feedback on appearance;
- eliminate ambiguities/uncertainty/poor wording;
- check readability;
- gain feedback on the types of questions asked (suitability/feasibility/format (e.g. open/closed/multiple choice);
- gain feedback on appropriateness of question stems;
- generate items for further exploration/discussion;
- gain feedback on response categories;

- gain feedback on length/timing (when to conduct the data collection as well as how long each took to complete (e.g. each questionnaire))/coverage/ease of completion;
- identify redundant items/questions (those with little discriminability;
- identify irrelevant questions;
- identify non-responses;
- identify how motivating/non-engaging/threatening/intrusive/ offensive items were;
- identify sensitive topics and problems in conducting interviews;
- gain feedback on leading questions;
- identify items which were too easy/difficult/complex/remote from experience;
- identify commonly misunderstood or non-completed items.

4.9. The validity and reliability of the research

Cohen *et al.* (2000) remark that research claims to be valid in the sense that the instruments used measure what they are meant to measure, thus the data obtained are able to sustain the explanation of the issue under investigation. The research also needs to be reliable in the sense that the same research result should be obtainable using the same instrument over time and over similar samples. Reliability is also a matter of confidence that can be placed in the results – whether they fairly, consistently, accurately, completely, comprehensively, unselectively, honestly and authentically represent the views of the respondents (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993).

With regard to qualitative research, in this case interviews, reliability and validity were ensured through rich, honest, authentic, in-depth responses on a wide range of issues (Hammersley, 1992). In order to establish the validity and reliability for the interview, interview questions in the research were based on the literature review. The factors identified were then converted into concrete questions – constructs that had been confirmed through relevant literature; the *construct* validity of the interview was thus established (Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

The research questions covered the elements and factors that could lead to effective English teaching and learning, therefore, the data obtained would represent the issues under investigation (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992); in that sense the research questions had achieved *content* validity – elements of the main issue researched gave a fair representation and coverage of the issues under investigation. Further, the interview was piloted with two experienced teachers whose perspectives and views on the effectiveness of English teaching further backed up the scope, understandability, and appropriateness of the research questions. This, too, enhanced the content validity of the interviews.

The sampling strategies used ensured that data collected from this representative sample could then also be used to make generalizations about English teaching and learning in Macau; this addressed *external* validity of the research (Lewis-Beck, 1993).

To ensure reliability of the interview data, the interviewees' subjectivity, attitudes and perspectives were noted through authentic and honest data analysis and reporting during

transcription (Smith, 1975). Data obtained through the interviews and questionnaires, both valid and reliable, enabled generalizations to be made to the situation of English teaching and learning in Macau. This is termed *concurrent* validity, with two instruments being used to validate and cross-check the data collected in the issues (*ibid.*).

Threats to the internal validity of the interview data (Pilliner, 1973), such as respondents' truthfulness in providing data in the interview, were addressed by interviewing experienced, mature, informed and confident teachers so that more valid and reliable data might be obtained. The interview questions were clear (using prompts) and as comprehensive as possible (by probes) (Whyte, 1982), and interviewees had the opportunity to address issues in their own terms (by open-ended questions) (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). The researcher, like most interviewees, was a female Chinese, thereby minimizing possible biases from respondents being interviewed by a member of a different ethnic/racial group or gender (e.g. females being interviewed by a male) (*ibid.*). The participants were all Chinese, reflecting the overwhelming number of Chinese teachers of English in Macau. The researcher also avoided making judgements on what the respondents said and did not lead the respondents to say what they thought the researcher would like to hear (Morrison, 1993). Some respondents might have been shy and tense during an interview, therefore, the interview was conducted in as relaxing and conversation-like manner as possible (Lewis, 1992). It was important to show positive rapport with the respondents, to be sensitive to their personalities, feelings and non-verbal expressions (Kvale, 1996). Having addressed all these possible threats to the internal validity of the data during the interviews, the respondents would be more confident and at

ease in expressing their issues, and thus give more valid and reliable views and opinions on the issues.

For quantitative research, in this case a questionnaire, reliability and validity were achieved through comprehensive coverage of the issues raised in the literature and by respondents at interviewees (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In this way, the questionnaire achieved both content validity and construct validity. Since the sample was a proportionate stratified random sample as described above, the data collected could be utilized to make generalizations about the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau, thus establishing *external* validity.

As with interviews, there are also threats to internal validity in a questionnaire, such as respondents' truthfulness in providing honest and accurate answers to the questionnaire items, and the problem of non-response. To address truthfulness, the data could be cross-checked against the qualitative interview data which were to be treated separately from the questionnaire (i.e. those interview data which were treated independently of the questionnaire rather than as feeding into the questionnaire construction) (Patton, 1980). Non-response was minimized through more personal contact such as follow-up requests and telephone calls, to convince them that this research might result in improvements in English teaching and that their contribution was very important in making this possible (Hudson and Miller, 1997).

It was important for the questionnaire to be comparatively long in order to be valid (content validity) and reliable (consistent and representative), even though this could mean that respondents may become tired and would not complete it properly; keeping the questionnaire long was considered to be the better of the two options between validity and reliability on the one hand and non-completion on the other. Care was taken to ensure that the questionnaire looked straightforward, manageable, attractive and interesting, in order to appeal to the respondents; clearly and boldly displayed instructions were included on how to complete the questionnaire (this was also addressed in the pilot) (see Appendix D for a copy of the questionnaire).

Care was also taken to ensure that the questionnaire asked appropriate kinds of questions (avoiding leading, complex, irritating questions, etc.) in order to elicit the most appropriate, reliable and valid empirical data to address the research purposes (Wilson and McLean, 1994). The response categories were kept as discrete as possible and provided a full range of possible responses from which the respondents might choose.

The sequence of the research was: piloting the interviews → conducting the interviews → piloting the questionnaire → conducting the questionnaire. Together with the sampling strategy used, these ensured that reliability and validity were addressed. The empirical research data were collected over a four-month period in 2000.

4.10. Problems encountered and resolved during data collection

It was mentioned earlier in this chapter that overwhelming majority of the schools in Macau are private. They have full autonomy over curricula, school management, policy making, recruitment of teachers and students, budget and so on. This same autonomy created some obstacles to data collection.

Schools selected from the government and private religious schools for both the interviews and questionnaires were very cooperative and helpful. For the interviews, data collection was simple and direct as long as the researcher could fit round the times of the teachers who had agreed to be interviewed. Similarly, with regard to the questionnaires, as long as they were delivered to, and collected from, the schools, there was little problem, as the principals had already obtained the teachers' agreement to complete the questionnaires.

With regard to the non-religious schools, some principals declined any assistance, as they honestly claimed that they would only be part of interviews and questionnaires conducted by the local Education Department. This created some inconvenience, but it was solved by going to the next school from a random sample. However, a message emerged from this, that is, for any future successful data collection on the field of English teaching, learning and achievements, it would be better to seek assistance from the government's Education Department. A letter of support would help. This is a good example of the

Chinese ethics of respect for the senior and authority. This implies that data collection should not be too difficult, if the proper channel is used.

Further, some schools indicated that they were frequently targeted for student research projects, and they felt saturated by this. Also, they indicated that all too frequently they received no benefit from having participated in the research. In these cases the researcher assured the school that she would provide them with a copy of the thesis. This satisfied the schools, and they participated. It is a good example of 'beneficence', as alluded to in the discussion of the ethics of research earlier in this chapter.



CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION

This chapter is divided into five main sections:

Section 5.1 presents data on the characteristics of the sample of teachers; these characteristics are then used as nominal, independent variables in the remainder of the data analysis.

Section 5.2 presents the results of the interviews and questionnaires. This is a long section, split into subsections for each research question;

Section 5.3 presents a summary of the interview data;

Section 5.4 presents a summary of the questionnaire data;

Section 5.5 suggests that there is considerable agreement between the interview and survey data.

5.1 Background characteristics of the interview and survey sample

5.1.1 Introduction

There were two sub-samples of teachers: the interview teachers, and the questionnaire teachers; both data sets on them are presented in order below.

All the respondents (N=112, with one missing return) were non-native English speakers teaching English; 84 teachers (74.3%) of the teachers were in Chinese-medium schools, and 29 teachers (25.7%) (N= 113) were in English-medium schools.

Table 5.1: Characteristics of the interview sample

Q1-3: years of English teaching experience and age groups taught	
Three P1 teachers (1-3)	Teaching students age between 6 or 7 for 7 to 8 years
Three P6 teachers (4-6)	Teaching students between age 11-13 for 10 to 14 years
Three F3 teachers (7-9)	Teaching students between age 12-14 for 5 to 9 years
Three F5 teachers (10-12)	Teaching students between age 14-17 for 6 to 20 years

The primary school interviewees were not English majors, but they had been teaching English for many years. All the secondary respondents were English majors and had several years of teaching experience.

5.1.2 Background details of the questionnaire sample

Of the 113 sample English teachers, 15 teachers (13.6%) were male, and 95 (86.4%) were female (there were 3 missing entries). There were over six times more female than male English teachers; female English teachers of English appear to predominate in Macau, as in most countries.

Table 5.2: Age of the sample

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	53	48.2%
30-39	33	30%
40-49	15	13.6%
50+	9	8.2%
Total	110	100%
Missing	3	
Total	113	

51.8% of teachers were over 30, these teachers maybe use older theories of English language teaching.

Table 5.3: Years of teaching

Years of teaching	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	59	52.7%
6-15	40	35.7%
16-25	6	5.4%
Over 25	7	6.3%
Total	112	100%
Missing	1	
Total	113	

More than 50% of this sample comprised teachers with teaching experience of 1-5 years; 88.4% had been teaching for less than 15 years.

Table 5.4: Years of teaching English

Years of teaching English	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	60	53.6%
6-14	32	28.6%
15-24	12	10.7%
25+	8	7.1%
Total	112	100%
Missing	1	
Total	113	

More than 50% of the sample had 1-5 years of English teaching experience. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 suggest that some teachers came to teaching English later in their teaching career. Further data indicate that 53 teachers (47.7%) were trained to teach English, 58 teachers (52.3%) were not trained to teach English, raising the question of whether this undermines English teaching effectiveness.

Table 5.5: Respondents' highest qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Form 6	10	9.3%
Teachers' Certificate/Diploma	43	39.8%
First degree	39	36.1%
Higher degree	13	12%
Other	3	2.8%
Total	108	100%
Missing	5	
Total	113	

Almost 50% of the sample (49.1%) had only achieved Form 6 (school leaving level) and Teachers' Certificate/Diploma as their highest qualification. Around one third (36.1%) had a first degree, and around a half (48.1%) had a degree-level award. It would be incorrect to say that only 39.8% of teachers had received teacher training, as respondents were asked for their *highest* qualification (i.e. a respondent with a first degree may have followed teacher training but this would not be recorded here). Nevertheless one can note that English teaching in Macau is far from being a graduate profession. Further, teachers of English in Macau may possess a degree in English but *no* teacher training, though the data here do not provide numbers in this category (but see tables 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 below).

A crosstabulation was run between the number of years that respondents had been teaching and whether they had been trained to teach (table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Number of years in teaching and teacher training

Years in Teaching	Trained to Teach	Not Trained to Teach	Total
1-5	30 (27.3%)	28 (25.5%)	58 (52.7%)
6-15	18 (16.4%)	21 (19.1%)	39 (35.5%)
16-25	2 (1.8%)	4 (3.6%)	6 (5.4%)
Over 25	3 (2.7%)	4 (3.6%)	7 (6.4%)
Total	53 (48.2%)	57 (51.8%)	110 (100%)

(N.B. For all the tables in this chapter, percentages in the cells have been rounded, and the more exact percentages are presented in the row and column totals).

The groups which have been teaching the longest (over 25 years and 16-25 years) include the highest proportions of untrained teachers.

Table 5.7: Highest qualification in teaching of English

Highest qualification in teaching English	Frequency	Percentage
Form 6	19	18.1%
Certificate	26	24.8%
Diploma	18	17.1%
First degree	31	29.5%
Higher degree	11	10.5%
Total	105	100%
Missing	8	
Total	113	

The highest formal qualifications to teach English in Macau for 60% of the teachers were a Certificate or Diploma, revealing the lack of *formal* qualifications in the English teachers in Macau. Table 5.8 presents the numbers of teachers in different age groups who were specifically trained to teach English:

Table 5.8: Number of teachers by age group who were trained to teach English

Age	Trained to Teach English		Total
	Yes	No	
20-29	28 (25.9%)	24 (22.2%)	52.9 (48.1%)
30-39	18 (16.6%)	14 (12.9%)	32 (29.6%)
40-49	2 (1.8%)	13 (12%)	15 (13.8%)
50+	3 (2.7%)	6 (5.6%)	9 (8.3%)
Total	51 (47.2%)	57 (52.7%)	108 (100%)

(N. B. In all the tables in this chapter, figures in brackets refer to percentages).

Using the Kruskal-Wallis test, the distributions were statistically significant ($p = 0.024$).

Less than 50% (47.2%) of teachers of English were trained to teach English, and only 4.5% of teachers aged 40+ were trained to teach English. When combined with data from the previous table, this suggests limitations to the formal English teacher training of the English teachers in Macau. Those trained and formally qualified to teach English are

overwhelmingly young (20-29) (25.9%) or relatively young (30-39) (16.6%). Teachers of English who are 40+ make up 22.1% of the teaching quota, but they are under-qualified to teach in terms of formal qualifications.

Table 5.9: Number of teachers by age group and by their qualifications in English

Age	English Qualification					Total
	Form 6	Certificate	Diploma	First degree	Higher degree	
20-29	7 (6.8%)	11 (10.8%)	8 (7.8%)	18 (17.6%)	2 (1.9%)	46 (45.1%)
30-39	3 (2.9%)	11 (10.8%)	4 (3.9%)	10 (9.8%)	5 (4.9%)	33 (32.4%)
40-49	6 (3.9%)	2 (1.9%)	3 (2.9%)	1 (0.9%)	3 (2.9%)	15 (14.7%)
50+	3 (2.9%)	2 (1.9%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	8 (7.8%)
Total	19 (18.6%)	26 (25.5%)	16 (15.7%)	30 (29.4%)	11 (10.8%)	102 (100%)

The picture of under-qualification is clear:

- 58.9% of teachers in the 50+ age group ($[\{1.9 + 0.9 + 0.9 + 0.9\} \div 7.8] \times 100$), i.e. 4.6% of the total number of English teachers in the whole sample, had a formal qualification in English above Form 6; the others had only Form 6; 58.5% of teachers in the 40-49 age group ($[\{1.9 + 2.9 + 0.9 + 2.9\} \div 14.7] \times 100$), i.e. 8.6% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, had a formal qualification in English above Form 6; the others had only Form 6; 90.7% of teachers in the 30-39 age group ($[\{10.8 + 3.9 + 9.8 + 4.9\} \div 32.4] \times 100$), i.e. 29.4% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, had a formal qualification in English above Form 6; 84.5% of teachers in the 20-29 age group ($[\{10.8 + 7.8 + 17.6 + 1.9\} \div 45.1] \times 100$), i.e. 38.1% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, had a formal qualification in English above Form 6.

- 23% of teachers in the 50+ age group ($[(0.9 + 0.9) \div 7.8] \times 100$), i.e. 1.8% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a degree in English; 25.9% of teachers in the 40-49 age group ($[(0.9 + 2.9) \div 14.7] \times 100$), i.e. 3.8% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a degree in English; 45.4% of teachers in the 30-39 age group ($[(9.8 + 4.9) \div 32.4] \times 100$), i.e. 14.7% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a degree in English; 43.2% of teachers in the 20-29 age group ($[(17.6 + 1.9) \div 45.1] \times 100$), i.e. 19.5% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a degree in English.

The older teaching population (40+) have few formal qualifications to teach English, with only 5.6% in this age group ($0.9 + 2.9 + 0.9 + 0.9$) having a degree and 6.8% ($3.9 + 2.9$) having only Form 6. Newer teachers, 19.5% ($17.6 + 1.9$) of those in the 20-29 age group possessed a degree and 14.7% ($9.8 + 4.9$) of those in the 30-39 age group had a degree. Overall, considerably less than half of the teachers in the sample – 40.3% ($29.4 + 10.8$) – had a degree in English. Though a degree is, perhaps, a proxy measure of effectiveness (a degree in English is no guarantee of teaching effectiveness in English), nevertheless the pattern of under-qualification and increasing qualification of the teachers of English is important.

A crosstabulation was run between the number of years that respondents had been teaching and the highest qualifications they had gained in teaching English (table 5.10):

Table 5.10: English qualifications and years in teaching

Years in Teaching	English Qualifications					Total
	Form 6	Certificate	Diploma	First Degree	Higher Degree	
1-5	7 (6.7%)	11 (10.6%)	9 (8.7%)	20 (19.2%)	5 (4.8%)	52 (50%)
6-15	9 (8.7%)	12 (11.5%)	4 (3.8%)	10 (9.6%)	5 (4.8%)	40 (38.5)
16-25	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	4 (3.8%)			6 (5.8%)
Over 25	2 (1.9%)	2 (1.9%)		1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	6 (5.8%)
Total	19 (18.3%)	26 (25%)	17 (16.3%)	31 (29.8%)	11 (10.6%)	104 (100%)

The data show clearly, regardless of the different proportions of the sub-groups, that:

- 31% of the sample who had been teaching for over 25 years ($[(0.9 + 0.9) \div 5.8] \times 100$), 1.8% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a degree;
- 65.5% of the sample who had been teaching for 16-25 years ($[(3.8) \div 5.8] \times 100$), 3.8% of the total number of teachers in the whole sample, held a diploma, and none held a degree;
- those teaching English the longest have the lowest formal qualifications;
- the lower the number of years in teaching, the higher the qualification held.

Table 5.11: Grade/level taught at present

Grade/level	Frequency	Percentage
P1-P3	19	16.8%
P4-P6	27	23.9%
F1-F3	36	31.9%
F4-F6	26	23%
Across the range	5	4.4%
Total	113	100%

The intended spread of grades taught by the sample teachers has been met (table 5.11), ensuring that the sampling meets the requirements set out in the research design for representativeness and, hence, generalizability of results.

Table 5.12: School types

School types	Frequency	Percentage
Government	11	9.7%
Private-religious	56	49.6%
Private non-religious	46	40.7%
Total	113	100%

The three types of schools in Macau – government, private-religious and private non-religious – comprise 19.6%, 42.4% and 33.7% of the sample respectively, adhering to proportionate stratified random sampling (see chapter 4). Table 5.12 indicates that a proportionate percentage has been taken from each stratum and thus the data provide a good representation of the whole population.

Table 5.13: Days of in-service training

Days	Frequency	Percentage
0-3	61	56.5%
4-6	19	17.6%
7-10	6	5.6%
Over 10	22	20.4%
Total	108	100%
Missing	5	
Total	113	

More than 56% of the sampled teachers had attended either none or up to three days of in-service training(table 5.13).

Table 5.14: Number of in-service days attended by age group during one year

Age	Number of Days of In-service Education During One Year				
	0-3	4-6	7-10	Over 10 days	Total
20-29	28 (26.6%)	9 (8.6%)	3 (2.9%)	11 (10.5%)	51 (48.6%)
30-39	18 (17.1%)	6 (5.7%)	2 (1.9%)	7 (6.7%)	33 (31.4%)
40-49	8 (7.6%)	3 (2.9%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	13 (12.4%)
50+	5 (4.8%)	1 (0.9%)		2 (1.9%)	8 (7.6%)
Total	59 (56.2%)	19 (18.1%)	6 (5.7%)	21 (20%)	105 (100%)

Several points emerge from table 5.14:

- 38.2% ($[(0.9 + 1.9) \div 7.6] \times 100$) of the teachers aged 50+, 2.8% of the sample, had attended 4 or more days of in-service education in one year;
- 37.9% ($[(2.9 + 0.9 + 0.9) \div 12.4] \times 100$) of the teachers aged 40-49, 4.7% of the sample, had attended 4 or more days of in-service education in one year;
- Older teachers are attending very little in-service education (even with the figures adjusted to reflect the different proportions of teachers in the age groups 40+);
- 45.5% ($[(5.7 + 1.9 + 6.7) \div 31.4] \times 100$) of teachers aged 30-39, 14.3% of the sample, had attended 4 or more days of in-service education in one year;
- 45.2% ($[(8.6 + 2.9 + 10.5) \div 48.6] \times 100$) of teachers aged 20-29, 22% of the total sample, had attended 4 or more days of in-service education in one year.

The data here, when taken with the data from previous tables, suggest that older teachers who are poorly formally qualified to teach English, are not receiving the in-service support to improve, and that younger teachers are also not receiving the in-service support to improve their teaching. The combination of poor initial qualification and poor in-service development provision is an important finding here, and suggests that if effectiveness is to be improved, then both initial and post-initial training and provision have to be improved.

5.1.3 *Summary of characteristics of the sample*

The picture that emerges suggests that:

- English teachers are mainly young, female, inexperienced, poorly qualified overall and with limited training in teaching English in particular;
- The older teachers, in particular, are poorly trained (a common picture in a developing country);
- There is limited and inadequate in-service education for all age groups;
- The entire sample comprised non-native speakers of English;
- The medium of instruction in three quarters of the schools was Chinese.

5.2 **Analysis of the Interview and Questionnaire Data**

5.2.1 *Methods of data analysis*

The interview data were analyzed using content analysis, and the questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS. Both sets of data that address the same research question are presented in the same section. The data are presented following the frame of the research questions, as have been presented earlier in chapter 4:

- (i) What is the level of achievement of Form Five students in Macau?

- (ii) What is the significance of curriculum-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (iii) What is the significance of teacher-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (iv) What is the significance of student-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (v) What is the significance of teaching methodology-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (vi) What is the significance of society-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (vii) What is the significance of school-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (viii) What is the significance of assessment-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (ix) What is the significance of language-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
- (x) What are some ways of improving English teaching and learning in Macau?

In analyzing the interview data *pre-ordinate* content analysis has been used to answer each of the research questions (Morrison, 1993). Interview data are entered for each issue and by each respondent, with a summary provided for each issue (*ibid.*: 128). The content analysis was undertaken immediately after each interview (Spradley, 1979; Miles and Huberman, 1984), as late transcribing 'might enfeeble the analysis' and risk

forgetting key elements of the interview, both in content and process, and also, for the researcher, because early transcribing led to reshaping of the interviewing techniques for the next data collection (Morrison, 1993: 63).

Morrison (1993) suggests that it is important to note aspects which audio recording does not catch, e.g. non-verbal communication, emotions expressed, the interview setting (physical and emotional), the degree of animation or intensity with which a particular item was discussed, engagement, willingness to express, etc., as this also helps to determine any regularity or strength of feelings towards the issues, and whether the same issue had aroused the same emotion in more than one respondent. Such an analysis can clarify the seriousness or importance attached to an issue either by respondents. It also helps to identify hesitation, fear, anxiety, confidence, etc. in the interviewee, which might indicate his/her knowledge or the sensitivity of the question. Hence a combination of both verbal and non-verbal data was used in the content analysis.

The interview data are presented either in prose or tabular form, whichever provides greatest clarity and parsimony. In tabular form, where the interview data for respondents in each age phase are similar, they are grouped into a single set of responses by row; where there are dissimilar responses they are kept separate. The left hand column in each table indicates the number of the respondent (1-12) and the grade which each taught (e.g. P1, F3, etc.); e.g. '1-3: P1' means the responses of respondents 1-3, who taught P1 classes; the right hand column indicates the responses. In many cases it can be seen that respondents *all* gave similar responses. A comment is provided after each table. As the

range of the interview questions was already very wide, very few extra comments were made by the respondents. Space prevents the detailed verbatim reporting of responses.

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaires are presented in frequencies and percentages of responses and the use of statistical analysis. A summary comment is provided after each table of data, as with the interview data.

5.2.2 Answering the research questions

5.2.2.1 The level of Achievement of Form Five students in Macau

Research question: what is the level of achievement of Form Five students in Macau?

The interview data (question 4: *the standard of Form Five students*) are presented in table 5.15:

Table 5.15: Interviewees' comments on the standard of Form 5 students

Q4: Teachers' comments on the standard of Form Five students	
1-3: P1	The primary respondents said that between 30%-40% of F5 students were below standard. However, as there are no state-wide examinations in Macau, the standard they had in mind was only based on their own views.
4-6: P6	
7-9: F3	These F3 teachers remarked that 30% of F5 students were below standard. However, as there are no state-wide examinations in Macau, the standard varied across the schools in Macau.
10. F5	About 80% of the F5 students had only F3 or F4 standard and only 20% were up to the F5 standard. However, as there are no state-wide examinations, this estimation was based on her own view.
11-12: F5	Two of the F5 teachers commented that only about 30% were below standard. Again, as there are no state-wide examinations in Macau, the standard varied depending on individual schools. Some students managed to get into universities, so some students should have reached the standard.

From the interviewees' responses, the majority of F5 students were below the required F5 standard in English, with 30% below standard being the modal response, but with variations between a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 70% of F5 students being up to standard.

Table 5.16 presents survey respondents' views on F5 students' level of English in Macau.

Table 5.16: Level of achievement

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Long way below standard	13	12.5%
Below standard	48	46.2%
At the required standard	39	37.5%
Above standard	4	3.8%
A long way above standard		
Total	104	100%
Missing	9	
Total	113	

58.7% (12.5 + 46.2) of the survey sample agree that F5 students' English level of achievement is either a 'long way below standard' or 'below standard'. Only 37.5% of the F5 students are at the required standard and less than 4% are above standard. The modal score here is for the level 'below standard'. The scores are not evenly distributed across the levels of achievement, but are skewed towards the 'below standard' levels of achievement. There were no scores in the category 'a long way above standard'.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of F5 students who were above, around, and below standard (questionnaire items B2, B3, B4) in their English.

Table 5.17 sets out the results. The frequencies and percentages are shown.

Table 5.17: The rating scale data summarized on F5 students' English standard

	1 <20%	2 20-40%	3 41-60%	4 61-80%	5 >80%	Total	Missing
Above standard	45 (42.5%)	37 (34.9%)	19 (17.9%)	2 (1.9%)	3 (2.8%)	106 (100%)	7
Around standard	14 (13.2%)	45 (42.5%)	42 (39.6%)	5 (4.7%)		106 (100%)	7
Below standard	9 (8.5%)	27 (25.5%)	39 (36.8%)	26 (24.5%)	5 (4.7%)	106 (100%)	7

The percentage of students judged to be above standard is low, as almost 78% (42.5 + 34.9) of the survey sample responded that only up to 40% of F5 students in Macau were above standard. Only about 5% (1.9 + 2.8) of the survey sample thought that between 60-80% or >80% of F5 Macau students were above standard. The table indicates that:

- The modal category for 'above standard' was <20% (from 42.5% of teachers);
- 77.4% (42.5+34.9) of teachers thought that less than 40% of students were above standard, and 4.7% (1.9 + 2.8) of teachers thought that over 60% of the students were above standard; the results of the 'above standard' category are skewed to the very low numbers of students who are above standard;
- The modal category for 'around standard' was 20-40% (from 42.5% of teachers);
- 55.7% (13.2 + 42.5) of teachers thought that less than 40% of students were around standard; 95.4% (13.2 + 42.5 + 39.6) of teachers thought that less than 60% of students were around standard and 4.7% of teachers thought that over 60% of students were around average; no respondents thought that over 80% of students were around standard. The results of the 'around standard' category are skewed to the low numbers of students who are around standard;
- The modal category for 'below standard' was 41-60% (36.8% of teachers);

- 66% ($36.8 + 24.5 + 4.7$) of teachers thought that over 41% of students were below standard; 91.8% ($36.8 + 24.5 + 4.7 + 25.5$) thought that up to 60-80% of students were below standard; 86.8% ($25.5 + 36.8 + 24.5$) thought that between 20% and 80% of students were below standard, and 8.5% thought that less than 20% of students were below standard. The results of the 'below standard' category are skewed towards the high numbers of students who are below standard.

The vast majority of the survey sample believe that large numbers of students were below standard, only a small number were around standard, and only a tiny number were above standard. There appears to be a problem of under-achievement in Form 5 students.

When Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests (as appropriate) were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 4 cases out of a possible maximum of 44 (11×4 items on Section B), i.e. 9.1%, where the distributions were statistically significant; the results showed that:

- (a) Teachers with a degree tended to be less generous in their views of the number of students who were above and around standard than were other teachers;
- (b) Secondary teachers (particularly of forms 4-6) tended to be less generous in their views of the number of students who were above standard than were other teachers;
- (c) Teachers in Chinese medium schools were more generous than those in English medium schools in their views of the number of students who were above standard.

Table 5.18 presents the survey respondents' rating scale data on aspects of poor English performance in Macau.

Table 5.18: Survey rating scale data summarized for poor performance

Areas of students' poor performance	1 very small problem	2 small problem	3 quite a large problem	4 a large problem	5 a very large problem	Total	Missing
Poor at reading	2 (1.9%)	27 (25.7%)	50 (47.6%)	16 (15.2%)	10 (9.5%)	105 (100%)	8
Poor at speaking	2 (1.9%)	8 (7.6%)	23 (21.9%)	45 (42.9%)	27 (25.7%)	105 (100%)	8
Poor at writing	1 (1%)	8 (7.7%)	39 (37.5%)	39 (37.5%)	17 (16.3%)	104 (100%)	9
Poor at listening		13 (12.4%)	41 (39%)	40 (38.1%)	11 (10.5%)	105 (100%)	8
Students memorize rather than understand		14 (13.5%)	48 (46.2%)	29 (27.9%)	13 (12.5%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of grand total)	5 (0.9%)	70 (13.4%)	201 (38.4%)	169 (32.3%)	78 (14.9%)	(523) (100%)	

The modal score for four of the five categories is 'quite a large problem', and the fifth has a modal score in the category 'a large problem' (poor at speaking). Two categories have bi-modal scores: 'poor at writing' and 'poor at listening'; both of these bi-modal scores are shared between 'quite a large problem' and 'a large problem'. The modal score of category 3 ('quite a large problem') accounts for 34.1% of the total voting ($[(47.6 + 37.5 + 39 + 46.2) \div 500] \times 100$); the modal score of category 4 ('a large problem') accounts for 16.1% of the total voting ($[(42.9 + 37.5) \div 500] \times 100$); if the close bi-modal score of 38.1% ('for poor at listening') is added into this, then the category 4 accounts for 23.7% of the total voting ($[(42.9 + 37.5 + 38.1) \div 500] \times 100$).

Category 1 ('very small problem') consistently records the lowest overall score and, in total, is the smallest overall category (0.9%) by a very large margin (over 12 percentage points distance from the next smallest category), whilst categories 3 and 4 (quite a large problem' and 'a large problem') account for 70.7% (38.4 + 32.3) of the total scores on the table. The two categories of 'small' size problem (categories 1 and 2) account for only 14.3% of the overall voting (0.9 + 13.4), whilst the remaining three categories of 'large' problem (categories 3, 4 and 5) account for 85.6% of the total voting (38.4 + 32.3 + 14.9). The category 'a large problem' accounted for a third of the votes (32.3%).

The greatest problems exist in writing, where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 91.3% of the total scores for this item (37.5 + 37.5 + 16.3), followed by speaking English, where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 90.5% of the total scores (21.9 + 42.9 + 25.7%), and then listening to English, where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 87.6% of the total scores (39 + 38.1 + 10.5). The nature, spread and size of the problem of poor performance in Macau is immense. The range of poor performance covers speaking, listening, writing and reading in English.

Table 5.19 presents further survey data on factors contributing to students' poor performance.

Table 5.19: Further survey rating scale data on poor performance

Factors contributing to students' poor performance	1 very small problem	2 small problem	3 quite a large problem	4 a large problem	5 a very large problem	Total	Missing
Students' learning style	2 (1.9%)	17 (16.2%)	47 (44.8%)	34 (32.4%)	5 (4.8%)	105 (100%)	8
Poor teaching methods	4 (3.8%)	40 (38.1%)	44 (41.9%)	15 (14.3%)	2 (1.9%)	105 (100%)	8
Students can enter university despite poor English	3 (2.9%)	28 (26.7%)	40 (38.1%)	25 (23.8%)	9 (8.6%)	105 (100%)	9
English not needed for employment	5 (4.8%)	29 (27.6%)	45 (42.9%)	20 (19%)	6 (5.7%)	105 (100%)	8
English is not needed in daily life	6 (5.7%)	15 (14.3%)	30 (28.6%)	31 (29.5%)	23 (21.9%)	105 (100%)	8
Total (% of grand total)	20 (3.8%)	129 (24.6%)	206 (39.2%)	125 (23.8%)	45 (8.6%)	525 (100%)	

The modal score for four of the five categories is 'quite a large problem'; the fifth has a modal score in the category 'a large problem' ('English is not needed in everyday life'). Two of the categories have almost bi-modal scores: 'poor teaching methods' and 'English is not needed in daily life'; one of these bi-modal scores is shared between 'quite a large problem' and 'a large problem'. The modal score of category 3 ('quite a large problem') accounts for 33.5% of the total voting ($[(44.8 + 41.9 + 38.1 + 42.9) \div 500] \times 100$), and the modal score of category 4 ('a large problem') accounts for 5.9% of the total voting ($[(29.5 \div 500) \times 100]$).

Category 1 ('very small problem') records the lowest overall score in all cases but one and, in total, is the smallest overall category (3.8%) by a margin of over 4 percentage points' distance from the next smallest category, whilst categories 3 and 4 ('quite a large problem' and 'a large problem') account for 63% ($39.2 + 23.8$) of the total scores on the table. The two categories of 'small' size (categories 1 and 2) account for 28.4% of the overall voting ($3.8 + 24.6$), whilst the remaining three categories of 'large problem'

(categories 3, 4 and 5) account for 71.6% of the total voting ($39.2 + 23.8 + 8.6$). The category 'a large problem' accounted for nearly a quarter of the votes (23.8%).

The greatest problems lie in 'students' learning style', where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 82% of the total scores for this item ($44.8 + 32.4 + 4.8$), followed by 'English is not needed in everyday life', where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 80% of the total scores for this item ($28.6 + 29.5 + 21.9$), and then 'students can enter university despite poor English', where the three 'highest problem' categories account for 70.5% of the total scores for this item ($38.1 + 23.8 + 8.6$). This is problematic in that only some of the problems noted here are thought to reside with the schools (e.g. students' learning styles, teaching methods), others are considered to lie outside the schools (e.g. University entrance, use of English in everyday life).

Table 5.20 presents the ratings data for aspects of good English performance in Macau.

Table 5.20: Survey rating scale data summarized for good performance

Aspects of good performance	1 very poor	2 poor	3 quite good	4 very good	5 excellent	Total	Missing
Reading	4 (3.8%)	12 (11.4%)	55 (52.4%)	26 (24.8%)	8 (7.6%)	105 (100%)	8
Speaking	3 (2.9%)	29 (27.6%)	48 (45.7%)	18 (17.1%)	7 (6.7%)	105 (100%)	8
Writing	5 (4.8%)	16 (15.4%)	61 (58.7%)	18 (17.3%)	4 (3.8%)	104 (100%)	9
Listening	4 (3.8%)	20 (19%)	45 (42.9%)	31 (29.5%)	5 (4.8%)	105 (100%)	8
Reliance on under- standing rather than memorization	1 (1%)	20 (19%)	48 (45.7%)	32 (30.5%)	4 (3.8%)	105 (100%)	8
Students' learning style	4 (3.8%)	20 (19.2%)	55 (52.9%)	24 (23.1%)	1 (1%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of grand total)	21 (3.3%)	117 (18.6%)	312 (49.7%)	149 (23.7%)	29 (4.6%)	628 (100%)	

The modal score for all the items is ‘quite good’; this modal score, in all cases, is many percentage points from the second score in each category (the closest is some 14 percentage points away – in the item ‘listening’, and the greatest distance is some 41 percentage points away – in the item ‘writing’). The modal score of ‘quite good’ accounts for 49.7%% of the total voting and is 26 percentage points away from the second highest category (‘very good’).

Category 1 (‘very poor’) records the lowest overall score in all cases but two and, in total, is the smallest overall category (3.3%), whilst category 5 (‘excellent’) has only 4.6% of the total vote, suggesting that there is very little excellent performance in English in Macau – there are *no* items where ‘excellent’ performance even reached 10%. Categories 3 and 4 (‘quite good’ and ‘very good’) account for 73.4% (49.7 + 23.7) of the total scores in the table. The two categories of ‘poor’ (categories 1 and 2) account for 21.9% of the overall voting (3.3 + 18.6), whilst the remaining three categories of ‘good’ (categories 3, 4 and 5) account for 78.1%% of the total voting (49.7 + 23.7 + 4.6). The category ‘quite good’ accounted for nearly half of the votes (49.7%).

If one combines categories 3, 4 and 5, the ‘best’ overall item is ‘reading’, with 84.8% (52.4 + 24.8 + 7.6), followed by ‘reliance on understanding rather than memorization’ with 80% (45.7 + 30.5 + 3.8) and ‘writing’ with 79.8% (58.7 + 17.3 + 3.8). If one combines categories 1 and 2, the poorest performance is in ‘speaking’, with 30.5% (2.9 + 27.6), followed by ‘students’ learning style’ with 23% (3.8 + 19.2), and ‘listening’, with

22.8% (3.8 + 19); echoing table 5.18, which indicated that speaking, listening and students' learning styles were particularly weak.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were only eight cases out of a possible maximum of 176 (11x 16 items in Section C), i.e. 4.5%, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests; the results show that:

- (i) Teachers who had been trained to teach English were more generous than those who had not, in respect of suggesting that teachers used good teaching methods;
- (ii) Teachers with a degree regarded the issues of 'poor at speaking' and 'poor at writing' as more of a problem than those without a degree; teachers with a degree were more generous than others in suggesting that students were good at listening;
- (iii) Teachers in Chinese medium schools regarded the issues of 'poor at speaking' and 'poor at writing' as more of a problem than those in English medium schools;
- (iv) Secondary teachers (F4-F6) regarded the issue of 'poor at writing' as more of a problem than primary school teachers.

Overall the data for this research question show that, in the view of teachers:

- The problems of English performance are huge and lie 'across the board', i.e. in all aspects of English;

- Serious problems lie in speaking in English, followed by listening and writing;
- Students' learning styles and teachers' teaching styles are problematical;
- Some problems lie outside the schools (e.g. the capability of students to enter University without good English, and the lack of use of English in everyday life);
- The standard of English is mediocre, with very limited excellence in Macau.

5.2.2.2 *Curriculum-related factors (subdivided into relevant categories)*

Research question: What is the significance of curriculum-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) Syllabus factors

All the twelve interviewees had similar responses over the curriculum (question 13: *curriculum-related factors*): it is narrow, facts-dominated and rigid, with too much to cover, with teachers having limited and insufficient control over the content and scope of the syllabus, even though the syllabus might have been set by themselves, the English Panel of the school, or the Principal (i.e. it was a self-inflicted wound to some extent).

Table 5.21 presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views on the curriculum-related factors.

Table 5.21: Respondents' views on curriculum-related factors

Curriculum-related factors	1 very weak	2 weak	3 a little strong	4 strong	5 very strong	Total	Missing
1. The curriculum too fixed and rigid	3 (2.8%)	13 (12.1%)	50 (46.7%)	36 (33.6%)	5 (4.7%)	107 (100%)	6
2. The curriculum too narrow	2 (1.9%)	14 (13.1%)	45 (42.1%)	42 (39.3%)	4 (3.7%)	107 (100%)	6
3. Teachers have little control and autonomy	2 (1.9%)	16 (15%)	49 (45.8%)	28 (26.2%)	12 (11.2%)	107 (100%)	6
4. Great emphasis is placed on grammar learning		17 (15.9%)	47 (43.9%)	38 (35.5%)	5 (4.7%)	107 (100%)	6
5. The curriculum under-emphasizes understanding		14 (13.3%)	56 (53.3%)	31 (29.5%)	4 (3.8%)	105 (100%)	8
6. The curriculum requires much memorization		19 (17.8%)	45 (42.1%)	35 (32.7%)	8 (7.5%)	107 (100%)	6
7. There is too much to cover		11 (10.4%)	44 (41.5%)	35 (33%)	16 (15.1%)	106 (100%)	7
8. The curriculum is too superficial	1 (1%)	17 (16.2%)	49 (46.7%)	31 (29.5%)	7 (6.7%)	105 (100%)	8
9. The curriculum puts pressure on teachers		14 (13.1%)	34 (31.8%)	46 (43%)	13 (12.1%)	107 (100%)	6
10. The curriculum puts pressure on students	1 (0.9%)	12 (11.3%)	45 (42.5%)	36 (34%)	12 (11.3%)	106 (100%)	7
11. The curriculum under-emphasizes oral work	0 (0%)	14 (13.1%)	46 (43%)	35 (32.7%)	12 (11.2%)	107 (100%)	6
12. The curriculum under-emphasizes students' autonomy	1 (1%)	29 (27.9%)	35 (33.7%)	27 (26%)	12 (11.5%)	104 (100%)	9
13. The curriculum under-emphasizes listening	1 (0.9%)	18 (16.8%)	49 (45.8%)	33 (30.8%)	6 (5.6%)	107 (100%)	6
14. The curriculum under-emphasizes writing	1 (0.9%)	27 (25.5%)	44 (41.5%)	31 (29.2%)	3 (2.8%)	106 (100%)	7
15. The curriculum is driven by University's entrance requirements	6 (5.6%)	19 (17.8%)	44 (41.4%)	32 (29.9%)	6 (5.6%)	107 (100%)	6
16. The curriculum is exam-oriented	1 (0.9%)	13 (12.1%)	32 (29.9%)	44 (41.1%)	17 (15.9%)	107 (100%)	6
17. The curriculum has to compete with other language courses	1 (0.9%)	24 (22.4%)	44 (41.1%)	29 (27.1%)	9 (8.4%)	107 (100%)	6
18. The curriculum relies heavily on textbooks	4 (3.8%)	11 (10.4%)	45 (42.5%)	38 (35.8%)	8 (7.5%)	106 (100%)	7
19. The curriculum relies heavily on textbook exercises	4 (3.8%)	13 (12.5%)	39 (37.5%)	38 (36.5%)	10 (9.6%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of the grand total)	28 (1.4%)	315 (15.6%)	842 (41.7%)	665 (32.9%)	169 (8.4%)	2019 (100%)	

The modal score for 17 out of the 19 items is category 3 ('a little strong'), which accounts for 38.5% of the total voting ($[(46.7 + 42.1 + 45.8 + 43.9 + 53.3 + 42.1 + 41.5 + 46.7 + 42.5 + 43 + 33.7 + 45.8 + 41.5 + 41.4 + 41.1 + 42.5 + 37.5 + 41.7) \div 1,900] \times 100$), whilst the modal score for items 9 ('pressure on teachers') and 16 ('exam-oriented') is category 4 ('strong'), which accounts for 4.4% of the total voting ($[(43 + 41.4) \div 1900] \times 100$). Item 19 ('relies heavily on textbook exercises') has a bi-modal score in categories 3 and 4, indicating that the respondents attached great importance to this item. Items 7 ('too much to cover'), 9 ('pressure on teachers') and 16 ('exam-oriented') receive high voting in category 5 ('very strong'), showing that the respondents attached importance to these curriculum-related factors.

Survey respondents attached considerable importance to all 19 curriculum-related factors, as, when the total percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 are added together, the total accounts for 83% of the total voting. The sum of the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 for items 1-13, 16, 18-19 ranges from 80.2% (item 12, 'under-emphasizes students' autonomy') to 89.6% (item 7, 'too much to cover'). The sum for each of the items except 14 ('under-emphasizes writing') (73.5%), 15 ('driven by university's entrance requirements') (76.9%) and 17 ('compete with other language course') (76.6%) amounts to over 80%, clearly indicating the importance attached to these curriculum-related factors by the respondents. If categories 4 and 5 are totalled for each item, then item 16 ('exam oriented') receives a score of 57%, and item 9 ('pressure on teachers') receives a score of 55.1%, both exceptionally high scores, indicating that these two items have very

strong importance. Items 2 ('curriculum too narrow') and 14 ('under-emphasizes writing') have a very low response in category 5 (3.7% and 2.8% respectively).

All 19 items had a very low voting in category 1 ('very weak'); the total here for all the 19 items altogether amounts to only 1.4% of the total voting, indicating the limited importance attached to this category by the respondents. The same is true for category 2 ('weak'), as all the 19 items together amount to only 15.6% of the total voting. Overall, the scores are skewed towards the upper categories 3, 4 and 5, indicating the considerable importance given to all these 19 curriculum-related factors.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 18 cases out of a possible maximum of 209 (11 x 6 items on Section G – curriculum-related factors), i.e. 8.6% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests as appropriate; the results showed that:

- (i) the longer the teachers had been teaching, the weaker they saw the issue of exam-oriented curricula, and the longer they had been teaching English, the weaker they regarded the issue of English being driven by University entrance requirements;
- (ii) Teachers with a degree regarded as more of an issue than those without a degree: the curriculum: (a) being too fixed, narrow and textbook-driven; (b) emphasizing

- grammar; (c) under-emphasizing oral work and listening; (d) being driven by university entrance requirements;
- (iii) Teachers with a degree in English regarded as more of an issue than those without a degree: the curriculum: (a) emphasizing grammar; (b) under-emphasizing understanding; (c) under-emphasizing student autonomy; (d) as exam-oriented;
- (iv) Teachers in private religious schools regarded the issue of the 'curriculum gives teachers little autonomy' as much more of an issue than those in government and private non-religious schools, whilst teachers in government schools regarded the issue of the 'curriculum contains too much' as much more of an issue than those in private religious and non-religious schools.

The overall message that emerges from this section are that teachers perceive that:

- All 19 items make an important contribution to the effectiveness of English in Macau;
- Particularly problematic areas were pressure on teachers, exam-orientated curricula, over-reliance on textbooks, over-full curricula, and narrow curricula;
- Teachers who had been teaching longer, and those without a degree were more accepting of the situation than teachers who had been teaching for a shorter period of time and who had a degree.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where all the variables in Section G were intercorrelated using Spearman's *rho* in order to discover important associations of

curriculum-related factors. The picture that emerges from these correlations is that the curriculum:

- not only is too fixed, rigid and full, but that, it reinforces narrowness, superficiality and an inability to develop students' understanding;
- is hugely textbook-driven, with an emphasis on memorization and exercises, to the detriment of active learning and student engagement;
- is geared largely to university entrance requirements and examinations.

(b) *Textbook factors*

The interview data (question 16: *textbooks*) are presented in table 5.22:

Table 5.22: The use of textbooks

Q16: Textbooks	
1. P1	Textbooks helped to organize teaching, but this restricted teaching content.
2. P1	Teachers must provide much supplementary material, which takes time.
3. P1	Too many exercises came with the textbook and that there was not enough time to cover everything.
4. P6	There were too many choices in the market, though this provided variety.
5-6: P6	Teachers could focus on the more important areas if time was running out.
7-8: F3	Textbooks provided organized and systematic teaching.
9. F3	Teachers could supplement other materials to create links between the topics in the textbook to make learning more interesting.
10-12: F5	

Reliance on textbooks is huge, yet they create significant problems for teachers.

Table 5.23 presents the survey rating scale data on the role of English textbooks in the teaching and learning of English in Macau.

Table 5.23: the role of textbooks in English teaching and learning

Category Number	The role of textbooks	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not at all important		
2	A little important	10	9%
3	Important	72	64.9%
4	Very important	24	21.6%
5	Extremely important	5	4.5%
	Total	111	100%
	Missing	2	
	Total	113	

The total of 91% (64.9+ 21.6+ 4.5) for categories 3 (the modal score), 4 and 5 clearly indicates that textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning of English. This contrasts with the zero score in the category 1 and 9% in category 2.

(c) *Aspects of teaching*

All the interview respondents said that (question 10: *aspects of teaching*): (a) grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension were the main focus, as these were the basics of English learning and, in many cases, were the areas tested by university entrance examinations; (b) listening and writing were comparatively under-emphasized, owing to limited class time; and (c) oral activities were impossible as the classes were so big.

Table 5.24 presents the survey rating scale data on the main areas of focus in the teaching of English.

Table 5.24: Focus in the teaching of English

	1 never	2 rarely	3 occasionally	4 often	5 very often	Total	Missing
Speaking		9 (8.1%)	45 (40.5%)	39 (35.1%)	18 (16.2%)	111 (100%)	2
Listening		16 (14.7%)	28 (25.7%)	51 (46.8%)	14 (12.8%)	109 (100%)	4
Reading		2 (1.8%)	40 (36.7%)	52 (47.7%)	15 (13.8%)	109 (100%)	4
Writing		16 (14.5%)	48 (43.6%)	36 (32.7%)	10 (9.1%)	110 (100%)	3
Grammar	1 (0.9%)	9 (8.2%)	25 (22.7%)	51 (46.4%)	24 (21.8%)	110 (100%)	3
Translation	8 (7.3%)	22 (20%)	52 (47.3%)	25 (22.7%)	3 (2.7%)	110 (100%)	3
Total (% of grand total)	9 (1.4%)	74 (11.2%)	238 (36.1%)	238 (36.1%)	84 (38.5%)	659 (100%)	

The modal score for items 1 (speaking), 4 (writing) and 6 (translation) is category 3 ('occasionally'). Altogether they amount to 21.9% of the total voting ($[(40.5 + 43.6 + 47.3) \div 600] \times 100$). The modal score for items 2 (listening), 3 (reading) and 5 (grammar) is category 4 ('often'), which account for 21.4% of the total voting ($[(48.6 + 47.7 + 46.4) \div 600] \times 100$). There is very low voting for category 1 ('never') for all six items – they only amount to 1.4% of the total voting. When the scores for categories 4 ('often') and 5 ('very often') are added together for all six items, the highest total amounts to 68.2% for item 5 ('grammar'), and the lowest amounts to only 25.4% for item 6 (translation).

The survey respondents generally focused on all these language aspects in their teaching, the overall modal category is 'very often' (38.5%), closely followed by 36.1% for each of categories 3 and 4. The results for the six items are strongly skewed to the upper rating categories ('occasionally' to 'very often'), with a lower emphasis on translation and writing. Particular emphasis is laid on grammar (item 5), with a score of 68.2% in categories 4 and 5 (46.4 + 21.8), on reading (item 3), with a score of 61.5% in categories 4

and 5 (47.7+ 13.8), and on listening (item 2), with a score of 59.3% in categories 4 and 5 (46.8+ 12.8). All of these can be seen as 'receptive' skills. By contrast, the more 'productive' skills of speaking and writing only receive 51.3% (35.1+ 16.2) and 41.8% (32.7+ 9.1) respectively in categories 4 and 5. One can suggest that greater emphasis is given on passive-receptive rather than active-productive areas in English here.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 7 cases out of a possible maximum of 66 (11 x 6 items on Section F6 – Teacher-related factors), i.e. 10.6% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests as appropriate; the results showed that:

- (i) Teachers who had been trained to teach English focused on speaking generally more frequently than those who had not;
- (ii) Teachers who had been teaching between 1-5 years and between 15 and 24 years tended to focus on grammar a little more than the other teachers, as did those with a first degree, and those with a higher degree tended to focus less on the teaching of grammar than the other teachers;
- (iii) Teachers in Chinese medium schools focused on translation much more than those in English medium schools, and teachers of P1-P3 students focused slightly less than the other teachers on translation.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where all the variables in Section G in the questionnaire were correlated with Question 2 of Section F (teacher-related factors), using Spearman's *rho*, in order to discover any significant relationships within teacher variables in this part of Section F and between this part of Section F and the curriculum variables in Section G. The picture that emerges from these correlations are that teachers perceive that:

- (a) There was widespread over-reliance on textbooks and textbook exercises;
- (b) The English curriculum was too syllabus-based;
- (c) There was over-emphasis on drill, rote learning and memorization in the curriculum;
- (d) There was over-emphasis on spoon-feeding students across the several areas of the English curriculum;
- (e) Listening was undertaken by students without understanding the curriculum;
- (f) Considerable emphasis was placed on meeting university entrance requirements, and the curriculum was largely examination-oriented;
- (g) Student autonomy was minimal in curriculum matters;
- (h) The effects of (a) – (g) were to reduce students' opportunities to use, and think in, English and to develop oral work.
- (i) The variables 'insufficient opportunities for students to think in English', 'rely too much on textbooks', and 'too syllabus-based' touch many aspects of the curriculum.

(d) *Culture*

All the interview respondents said that (questions 22-25: *English culture and learning*):

(a) it would only be helpful to teach culture such as festivals, some traditions, food, etc.

when it arose in the books, as that might help to motivate students and give them a better idea of what they were learning. However, the outcome of English learning would not be adversely affected if the cultural aspects were not clearly explained;

(b) knowing more about the English culture should be more useful for students in higher forms, as demanded by the kind of English contexts they came across.

Table 5.25 presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views on the importance of reasons for learning about the English culture in the teaching and learning of English.

Table 5.25: Views on the importance of reasons for learning English culture

Reasons for learning about English culture	1 not at all important	2 little importance	3 important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Missing
1. To increase understanding of the English language	1 (0.9%)	16 (14.5%)	52 (47.3%)	35 (31.8%)	6 (5.5%)	110 (100%)	3
2. To know about English culture	1 (0.9%)	18 (16.4%)	45 (40.9%)	37 (33.6%)	9 (8.2%)	110 (100%)	3
3. A chance to think about one's culture		24 (21.8%)	52 (47.3%)	29 (26.4%)	5 (4.5%)	110 (100%)	3
4. To prepare more advanced students		11 (10%)	49 (44.5%)	42 (38.2%)	8 (7.3%)	110 (100%)	3
5. To make learning easier		14 (13%)	43 (39.8%)	38 (35.2%)	13 (12%)	108 (100%)	5
Total (% of grand total)	2 (0.4%)	83 (15.1%)	241 (44%)	181 (33%)	41 (7.5%)	548 (100%)	

The modal score for all five items is category 3 ('important'), which accounts for 44% of the total voting ($[(47.3+40.9+47.3+44.5+39.8)] \div 500] \times 100$). There was consensus that it was important to integrate English culture into the teaching and learning of English, for a variety of reasons. The importance of learning the English culture becomes very clear if categories 3, 4 and 5 ('important', 'very important', 'extremely important') are added together ($44+33+7.5$), as they account for 84.5% of the total scores.

Category 1 ('not at all important') records the lowest overall score in all cases and is only 0.4% of the total voting ($[(0.9+0.9 \div 500)] \times 100$). The sum of the overall totals for categories 1 and 2 ('not at all important' and 'little importance') is 15.5% ($0.4+15.1$) of the complete 100%, indicating that, generally, the respondents attached importance to both items. The item 'to prepare more advanced students' received the highest score of categories 3, 4, and 5 – 90% ($44.5+38.2+7.3$) – indicating this to be the most important perhaps, followed by 'to make learning easier' – 87% ($39.8+35.2+12$). The absence of any score in category 1 of 'not at all important' for items 3, 4 and 5 is significant. Generally the scores for each item were skewed towards categories 3, 4 and 5.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were only three cases out of a possible maximum of 55 (11×5 cases in section K) i.e. 5.5% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (all three using the Kruskal-Wallis test as appropriate; the results showed that:

- (i) the higher the teacher's qualification in English, generally the greater importance they gave to the need to study and know about English culture;
- (ii) secondary teachers also accorded importance to this issue.

The overall messages from this section are that: (a) it was important to integrate learning about English culture into the teaching and learning of English, particularly for advanced students; (b) injecting learning about English culture into the teaching and learning of English was also seen as a way of making English learning easier.

5.2.2.3 *Teacher-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of teacher-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) *Teacher training*

All the interview respondents raised the same issues (question 8: *teachers' training/qualifications*), that: (a) the training and qualifications they had acquired were adequate for them to handle their teaching; (b) they all needed more holiday-time/conveniently-timed in-service courses to upgrade their subject knowledge, English proficiency and teaching methodology, rather than teacher education (TE) courses which covered educational theories, and (c) these in-service courses should also be offered on a

much more long-term basis to have real impact, and so that teachers would have enough time to practice what they had learnt.

Table 5.26 presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views on how adequately trained they were.

Table 5.26: How adequately trained/untrained respondents felt themselves to be

Category Number	Training	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very inadequate		
2	Inadequate	18	17.6%
3	Adequate	58	56.9%
4	Very adequate	24	23.5%
5	Extremely adequately	2	2%
	Total	102	100%
	Missing	11	
	Total	113	

80% (56.9+23.5) of the survey respondents regarded themselves to have been either 'adequately' (category 3) or 'very adequately trained' to teach (categories 3 and 4). No respondents regarded themselves as being very inadequately trained, there being no voting in category 1 ('very inadequately'), and only 2% of votes were given to category 5 ('extremely adequately'). The spread of the data is largely confined to the three center categories (2, 3, 4), which account for 98% of the voting. The data, generally, indicate that the respondents regarded themselves to have been adequately trained. That said, over half of the English teachers (52.3%) were not trained to teach English.

Table 5.27 presents the rating scale data on respondents' views of initial and in-service teacher training in Macau.

Table 5.27: Respondents' views of the adequacy of initial and in-service training

	1 very inadequate	2 inadequate	3 adequate	4 very adequate	5 extremely adequate	Total	Missing
Initial training	9 (8.5%)	27 (25.5%)	58 (54.7%)	11 (10.4%)	1 (0.9%)	106 (100%)	7
In-service training	11 (10.4%)	38 (35.8%)	47 (44.3%)	10 (9.4%)		106 (100%)	7
Total (% of grand total)	20 (9.4%)	65 (30.7%)	105 (49.5%)	21 (9.9%)	1 (0.5%)	212 (100%)	

The modal score for both items is category 3 ('adequate') which accounts for 49.5% ($[\{54.7+44.3\} \div 200] \times 100$) of the total voting, i.e. respondents felt that they had received adequate initial and in-service training. However, the voting for both categories 4 ('very adequate') and 5 ('extremely adequate') is very low – 9.9% for category 4 ($[\{10.4+9.4\} \div 200] \times 100$) and 0.5% for category 5 ($[\{0.9+0\} \div 200] \times 100$), less than 11% of the total, whilst the total scores obtained for categories 1 ('very inadequate') – 9.4% and 2 ('inadequate') – 30.7% – account for 40.1% (9.4+ 30.7) of the total voting. The gap between 'adequate' (category 3) and these two categories suggests that initial and in-service training is, after all, not at all adequate. Almost half of the respondents thought that they had been offered insufficient training to prepare them to become teachers.

(b) *Teaching qualification*

All the interview respondents said that (question 12: *teacher-related factors*): (a) English teachers should possess good subject knowledge and at the same time utilize interesting and diverse teaching methods to motivate students, (b) they should be well-prepared for class, caring and interesting; (c) inadequate training led to poor teaching; (d) some teachers were not English majors, and this affected their quality of teaching.

(c) *Native and non-native English teachers*

The interview data (question 21: *native versus non-native English teachers*) are presented in table 5.28.

Table 5.28: Native and non-native English speakers

Q21: Native versus non-native English teachers	
1-3: P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese teachers knew students' learning problems better as they had been English learners before. Students were too young to understand, if teaching was conducted completely in English. Students benefited more from more Chinese explanations.
4-6: P6	
7. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-speaking teachers might not understand students' learning problems and could not give clear explanations. Students were thus frustrated learning through them. On the contrary, the Chinese-speaking English teachers would understand students' problems better and be able to offer more help. The drawback was students might be deprived of more English input.
8. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older students would benefit more from English-speaking teachers as they had learnt more and would be able to ask questions if they had problems. The communication gap would be smaller, resulting in better and more English interactions.
9. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students had more opportunities to listen to English. Students would learn more about the language and even the English culture from the native-speaking teachers.
10-12: F5	

Table 5.29 below presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views on the issue of native English teachers. The modal score for 3 of the 6 items is category 3 ('a little strong') – 22.4% of the total voting ($[(47.5\% + 42\% + 44.6) \div 600] \times 100$); the modal score for item 2 ('do not understand Chinese learners' difficulties in learning') is category 4 ('strong') – 6.9% ($[41.6 \div 600] \times 100$) of the total voting. Items 5 ('are poor English teachers') and 6 ('lack commitment') have a modal score in category 2 ('weak') – 11.7% ($[(33.7 + 36.7 \div 600) \times 100]$) of the total voting. Item 6 has a bi-modal score in categories 2 and 3. All items receive very high voting in category 2 ('weak'), ranging

from 36.7% (item 6) to the lowest 13.9% for item 2 ('do not understand learners' difficulties in learning'), suggesting that respondents saw these factors as have limited implications for the effectiveness of English teaching in Macau. This is further confirmed if the total scores for categories 1 and 2 are added, the sum amounting to 33.8%, i.e. one third of the total rating.

Table 5.29: Respondents' views on the issue of native-English teachers

Native English teachers:	1 very weak	2 weak	3 a little strong	4 strong	5 very strong	Total	Missing
1. Cause students not to understand English	2 (2%)	26 (25.7%)	48 (47.5)	19 (18.8%)	6 (5.9%)	101 (100%)	12
2. Do not understand Chinese learners' learning difficulties	1 (1%)	14 (13.9%)	36 (35.6%)	42 (41.6%)	8 (7.9%)	101 (100%)	12
3. Cannot build effective relationship with learners due to language barrier	4 (4%)	23 (23%)	42 (42%)	28 (28%)	3 (3%)	100 (100%)	13
4. Make students afraid to use English	8 (7.9%)	31 (30.7%)	45 (44.6%)	13 (12.1%)	4 (4%)	101 (100%)	12
5. Are poor English teachers	18 (17.8%)	34 (33.7%)	30 (29.7%)	17 (16.8%)	2 (2%)	101 (100%)	12
6. Lack commitment	7 (7.1%)	36 (36.7%)	35 (35.7%)	19 (19.4%)	1 (1%)	98 (100%)	15
Total (% of the grand total)	40 (6.6%)	164 (27.2%)	236 (39.2%)	138 (22.9%)	24 (4%)	602 (100%)	

All the items have a very low category 5 score ('very strong'), the highest is for item 2 ('do not understand Chinese learners' difficulties in learning') (7.9%) and the lowest is for item 6 ('lack commitment') (1%). The total for category 5 amounts to only 4% of the total 100%. Respondents attached limited importance to these items overall, i.e. native-English teachers' related factors may not hinder the effectiveness of teaching and learning of English in Macau. When the sum of the percentages for categories 3 ('a little strong') and 4 ('strong') are added together, the total ranges from 46.5% (item 5, 'are poor English teachers') to 77.2% (item 2, 'do not understand Chinese learners' difficulties in learning'); when the total scores for both categories are added, they amount to 62.1%,

twice the sum of the percentages in categories 1 and 2. When the scores for categories 3, 4 and 5 are totalled, they amount to 66.2% of the total voting. Given the high representation of categories 1 and 2, respondents do not seem to think that having native-English teachers teaching English is a strong factor in accounting for the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau.

Table 5.30 below presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views on the issue of non-native English teachers. Both the frequencies and percentages are shown.

Table 5.30: Respondents' views on the issue of non-native English teachers

Non-native English teachers:	1 very weak	2 weak	3 a little strong	4 strong	5 very strong	Total	Missing
1. Understand and appreciate students' learning problems	2 (1.9%)	14 (13%)	39 (36.1%)	40 (37%)	13 (12%)	108 (100%)	5
2. Explain more clearly than English speakers	3 (2.8%)	10 (9.3%)	41 (38.3%)	44 (41.1%)	9 (8.4%)	107 (100%)	6
3. Can use mother tongue for clarification	3 (2.8%)	9 (8.3%)	38 (35.2%)	44 (40.7%)	14 (13%)	108 (100%)	5
4. Rely greatly on textbooks	2 (1.9%)	20 (18.9%)	56 (52.8%)	24 (22.6%)	4 (3.8%)	106 (100%)	7
5. Are unable to correct students' mistakes	8 (7.5%)	27 (25.5%)	43 (40.6%)	28 (26.4%)		106 (100%)	7
6. Are poor models of English	10 (9.5%)	31 (29.5%)	37 (35.2%)	25 (23.8%)	2 (1.9%)	105 (100%)	8
7. Provide insufficient oral activities	2 (1.9%)	37 (34.6%)	39 (36.4%)	25 (23.4%)	4 (3.7%)	107 (100%)	6
8. Provide insufficient writing activities	9 (8.5%)	30 (28.3%)	40 (37.7%)	25 (23.6%)	2 (1.9%)	106 (100%)	7
9. Are poor English teachers	16 (15.4%)	31 (29.8%)	39 (37.5%)	14 (13.5%)	4 (3.8%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of the grand total)	55 (5.7%)	209 (21.8%)	372 (38.9%)	269 (28.1%)	52 (5.4%)	957 (100%)	

The modal score for 6 out of the 9 items is category 3 ('a little strong'), 26.7% of the total voting ($[(\{52.8 + 40.6 + 35.2 + 36.4 + 37.7 + 37.5\} \div 900) \times 100]$), whilst the modal score for items 1-3 is category 4 ('strong'), 13.2% of the total voting ($[(\{37 + 41.1 + 40.7\} \div 900) \times 100]$). All the items receive a low voting in categories 1 ('very weak') and 5 ('very

strong'). This is especially so for item 5 ('unable to correct students' mistakes') in category 5, with a zero score. An exception to the voting pattern in category 1 is for item 9 ('poor English teachers'), which receives the highest voting in that category (15.4%), indicating the strong importance that the respondents attached to this item. The voting in category 2 ('weak') is high and this is particularly so for items 4-9, ranging from 18.9% (item 4) to 34.6% (item 7), indicating that the respondents attached considerable importance to the items using this category. If categories 4 and 5 are totalled for each item, then item 2 ('explain more clearly than English speakers') receives a score of 49.5% and item 3 ('can use mother tongue for clarification') receives a score of 53.7%, both exceptionally high scores, indicating that these two items have very strong importance.

Overall, the data indicate that the survey respondents attached great importance to all these 9 non-native English teachers-related factors, as the total of the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 is 72.4% ($38.9 + 28.1 + 5.4$).

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 9 cases out of a possible maximum of 99 (11×9 items on Section J2), i.e. 9.1% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests as appropriate); the results showed that: (a) those who had been trained to teach English felt, more than those who had not been trained to teach English, that 'understand and appreciate students' problems', 'can explain more clearly

than native speakers', 'provide insufficient oral activities', 'provide insufficient written activities' and 'poor teachers of English' were important issues; (b) teachers with a degree felt that 'provide insufficient oral activities' and 'are poor teachers of English' to be more of an issue than those without a degree; (c) teachers in Chinese medium schools felt the issue of 'explain more clearly than native speakers' to be an important issue more than those in English medium schools.

Table 5.31 below presents the survey rating scale data of the importance of being native English teachers in Macau.

Table 5.31: Respondents' views on the importance of native English teachers in Macau

	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all important	4	3.9%
Little importance	20	19.6%
A little bit important	55	53.9%
Very important	21	20.6%
Extremely important	2	2%
Total	102	100%
Missing	11	
Total	113	

The modal score is the category 'a little important' (53.9%). The sum of categories 'little importance' to 'extremely important' is 96.1% of the total voting, suggesting that respondents attached importance to the issue of having native English teachers in Macau.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where all the variables in Section J were correlated with variables from Sections C2, F2, F6, and G1, using Spearman's *rho* in order to discover any important relationship between factors. Several correlations of importance emerged: (a) poor teachers of English correlated positively with 'reliance on drill, rote learning and memorization' ($\rho = 0.000$) and 'make students afraid to use English' ($\rho =$

0.000); (b) great reliance in textbooks correlated with ‘poor learning styles’ ($\rho = 0.014$), ‘poor teaching methods’ ($\rho = 0.020$), ‘teachers not being well or sufficiently trained’ ($\rho = 0.043$) and ‘reliance on drill, rote learning and memorization’ ($\rho = 0.020$); (c) making students afraid to use English correlated with ‘unable to correct students’ mistakes’ ($\rho = 0.018$) and ‘not good models of English’ ($\rho = 0.016$).

The overall messages that emerge in this section are:

- Being a native speaker, though important, was not considered to be as important a factor as others in accounting for the effectiveness of English in Macau;
- Non-native speakers of English are more effective than native speakers in explaining to students, and can use mother tongue for explanation;
- All six factors concerning native speakers were considered important;
- All nine factors concerning non-native speakers were considered important;
- Reliance on drill, rote learning and memorization, and textbook use were features of poor teaching.

(d) *Other teacher-related factors*

Table 5.32 presents the survey rating scale data for the impact of other teacher-related factors in accounting for effective English teaching and learning in Macau.

Table 5.32: teacher-related factors accounting for poor English learning in Macau

Teachers:	1 not at all important	2 very little important	3 a little bit important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Missing
1. Have poor English knowledge/abilities	3 (2.8%)	15 (14.2%)	36 (34%)	37 (34.9%)	15 (14.2%)	106 (100%)	7
2. Do not motivate students		9 (8.5%)	37 (34.9%)	48 (45.3%)	12 (11.3%)	106 (100%)	7
3. Use a limited range of teaching styles		8 (7.5%)	37 (34.9%)	56 (52.8%)	5 (4.7%)	106 (100%)	7
4. Are unprepared for lessons	2 (1.9%)	22 (20.8%)	37 (34.9%)	35 (33%)	10 (9.4%)	106 (100%)	7
5. Have an unconcerned attitude	4 (3.8%)	15 (14.2%)	38 (35.8%)	39 (36.8%)	10 (9.4%)	106 (100%)	7
6. Are insufficiently trained	1 (0.9%)	14 (13.2%)	39 (36.8%)	37 (34.9%)	15 (14.2%)	106 (100%)	7
7. Are non-English majors	3 (2.8%)	20 (18.9%)	37 (34.9%)	28 (26.4%)	18 (17%)	106 (100%)	7
8. Have insufficient INSET	2 (1.9%)	12 (11.4%)	50 (47.6%)	29 (27.6%)	12 (11.4%)	105 (100%)	8
9. Use didactic methods		14 (13.2%)	47 (44.3%)	33 (31.1%)	12 (11.3%)	106 (100%)	7
10. Use grammar-translation method	1 (0.9%)	17 (16%)	48 (45.3%)	33 (31.1%)	7 (6.6%)	106 (100%)	7
11. Focus on drill and rote learning	1 (1%)	19 (18.1%)	48 (45.7%)	33 (31.4%)	4 (3.8%)	105 (100%)	8
12. Do not give students sufficient speaking opportunities	1 (1%)	11 (10.5%)	34 (32.4%)	47 (44.8%)	12 (11.4%)	105 (100%)	8
13. Do not give students enough opportunities to think in English		13 (12.5%)	30 (28.8%)	48 (46.2%)	13 (12.5%)	104 (100%)	9
14. Rely much on Chinese	4 (3.8%)	20 (19%)	31 (29.5%)	34 (32.4%)	16 (15.2%)	105 (100%)	8
15. Do not develop students' listening skills		14 (13.3%)	37 (35.2%)	48 (45.7%)	6 (5.7%)	105 (100%)	8
16. Place little emphasis on understanding skills		10 (9.5%)	43 (41%)	49 (46.7%)	3 (2.9%)	105 (100%)	8
17. Spoon-feed students		14 (13.2%)	31 (29.2%)	45 (42.5%)	16 (15.1%)	106 (100%)	7
18. Do not develop students' writing skills	1 (0.9%)	11 (10.4%)	41 (38.7%)	45 (42.5%)	8 (7.5%)	106 (100%)	7
19. Do not develop students' oral work		6 (5.7%)	29 (27.4%)	62 (58.5%)	9 (8.5%)	106 (100%)	7
20. Rely much on textbooks		11 (10.4%)	45 (42.5%)	38 (35.8%)	12 (11.3%)	106 (100%)	7
21. Are not native speakers of English	1 (0.9%)	27 (25.5%)	38 (35.8%)	27 (25.5%)	13 (12.3%)	106 (100%)	7
22. Are too syllabus-based		11 (10.4%)	42 (39.6%)	47 (44.3%)	6 (5.7%)	106 (100%)	7
23. Focus on memorization	1 (0.9%)	18 (17%)	36 (34%)	44 (41.5%)	7 (6.6%)	106 (100%)	7
24. Are not well-prepared for lessons	2 (1.9%)	11 (10.4%)	41 (38.7%)	38 (35.8%)	14 (13.2%)	106 (100%)	7
25. Lack support from colleagues	6 (5.8%)	10 (9.6%)	46 (44.2%)	34 (32.7%)	8 (7.7%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of the grand total)	33 (1.3%)	352 (13.3%)	978 (37%)	1014 (38.4%)	263 (10%)	2640 (100%)	

The modal score for 13 of the 25 items is category 4 ('very important'), i.e. 23% of the total voting ($[(\{34.9 + 45.3 + 52.8 + 44.8 + 46.2 + 32.4 + 45.7 + 46.7 + 42.5 + 42.5 + 58.5 + 44.3 + 41.5\} \div 2,500) \times 100]$). The modal score for 9 other items is category 3 ('a little bit important'), i.e. 15% of the total voting ($[(\{34.9 + 47.6 + 44.3 + 45.3 + 45.7 + 42.5 + 35.8 + 38.7 + 44.2\} \div 2,500) \times 100]$). Items 1, 4, and 5 are bi-modal, indicating the importance allocated to categories 3 ('a little bit important') and 4 ('very important'). When the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 are totalled, the total is almost 86% (37+38.4+10) of the total voting, clearly indicating the respondents' significant weighting attached to these three categories in accounting for English teaching and learning effectiveness.

Survey respondents attached great importance to all 25 teacher-related factors in accounting for teaching and learning effectiveness. The sum of the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 for items 1-3, 5-6, 8-13, 15-20, 22-23 and 25 ranges from 82% to 94.4%. High scores for the totals of categories 3, 4 and 5 are in items 2 ('do not motivate students') (91.5%), 3 ('limited range of teaching styles') (92.4%), 16 ('little emphasis on understanding skills') (90.6%) and 19 ('do not develop students' oral work') (94.4%). Combining categories 4 and 5 ('very important') and ('extremely important' respectively) yields particularly high scores in item 19 ('do not develop students' oral work) (67%), item 2 ('do not motivate students') (56.6%), item 3 ('limited range of teaching styles') (57.5%), item 12 ('do not gives students sufficient speaking opportunities') (56.2%), item 13 ('do not give students enough opportunities to learn in English') (58.7%), and item 7 ('spoon-feed students') (57.6%); indicating that these areas are of particularly high importance in teacher-related factors contributing to effectiveness of English in Macau.

Items 1 ('teachers have poor English knowledge/abilities'), 6 ('teachers are insufficiently trained'), 14 ('teachers rely much on Chinese') and 17 ('spoon-feed students') receive high voting in category 5 ('extremely important'). Items 3 ('limited range of teaching styles') (4.7%), 11 ('focus on drill and rote learning') (3.8%) and 16 ('little emphasis on understanding skills') (2.9%) have a very low percentage response in category 5 among all the 25 items in this section. However, when the results in this category are taken into account with the other results in categories 3 and 4, the final total percentages reach from over 80% to over 90% – item 3 (92.4%), item 11 (80.9%) and item 16 (90.6%) indicating that these several items are very important in accounting for teaching and learning effectiveness when taken into consideration with the rest of the ratings provided.

All the 25 items had very low voting in category 1 ('not at all important'), only 1.3% of the total voting, indicating the limited importance attached to this category by the respondents. Indeed, if one combines categories 1 and 2, then only one item 21 ('inactive non-English speaking-teacher') receives over 25%, only items 4, 7 and 14 score over 20%, and the rest range from 5.7% (item 19) to 19.1% (item 11); the overall voting in categories 1 and 2 accounts for only 14.6% of the total scores, indicating that, typically, considerable importance is given to all 25 items here.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 13 cases out of a possible maximum of 275 (11 x 3 items on Section F2), i.e.

4.7% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests as appropriate); the results show that:

- (i) Teachers who were trained to teach English regarded the issues of the ‘use of didactic methods’, ‘do not develop students’ writing skills’, and ‘lack mutual support from colleagues’ as more much more important than those who were not;
- (ii) Teachers with a degree in English regarded the issue of the overuse of Chinese as more much more important than those who did not have a degree;
- (iii) Teachers in Chinese medium schools generally regarded the issues of (a) reliance on drill, rote learning and memorization, and (b) ‘lack mutual support from colleagues’ as much more important than those in English medium schools;
- (iv) Teachers in private religious schools regarded the issues of ‘teachers with poor knowledge/abilities’, ‘not prepared for lessons’, ‘no concern for students’, ‘teachers not well or sufficiently trained’, ‘teachers not being English majors or specialists’ as much more important than those in government or private non-religious schools;
- (v) Teachers in government and private non-religious schools generally regarded the issue of teachers not having sufficient time to develop students’ skills as much more of an important issue than those in private religious schools.

It appears that, here, the teachers in private religious schools and teachers with higher qualifications may be less accepting, perhaps more demanding, of matters than those in

government or private non-religious schools, and maybe regard matters as more problematic and important than those in government and private non-religious schools.

This section indicates that survey respondents felt that:

- particular problems were: (a) the inability of teachers to motivate students; (b) the limited range of teaching styles; (c) little emphasis on understanding skills; (d) over-use of textbooks; (e) insufficient ability to develop students' oral work; (f) lack of opportunity for students to speak and to learn in English; (g) teachers' over-emphasis on 'spoon-feeding' students; (h) over-reliance on drill and rote learning;
- Problems of lack of teacher expertise were important (e.g. their lack of English knowledge, lack of training, and over-reliance on using Chinese);
- They had received inadequate initial and in-service training to teach English;
- There was limited use of students' chosen work, non-textbook-based work, group activities, oral activities, use of visual aids, and project work;
- Student-centred work and task-based activities were very limited and there was very considerable use of: (a) didactic teaching; (b) whole class teaching; (c) textbook-based learning; (d) grammar-translation methods; (e) traditional teaching methods;
- Considerable emphasis was placed on grammar, reading and listening (receptive skills), and less emphasis was placed on speaking and writing (productive skills);
- All the 25 teacher-related factors in table 5.32 are regarded as being very important in the effectiveness of English teaching in Macau.

5.2.2.4 *Student-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of student-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) *Attitudes towards English learning and learning methods*

The interview data (question 11: *student-related factors*) are presented in table 5.33:

Table 5.33: Student-related factors

Q11: Student-related factors	
1-3: P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were shy and were afraid of 'losing face' when they made mistakes in front of the class. Students basically had no interest in learning anything, especially a foreign subject. English learning was too bookish. Students had too many subjects to learn. There were too many other distractions such as surfing the Internet or going out with friends.
4-6: P6	
7. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could not relate English learning to other things they learned at school, so they had no interest. Students' language learning ability was poor and they feared English. Students could repeat programs, so they could be lazy and indifferent.
8. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students spent too much time surfing the net. Students put more time into science rather than language subjects.
9. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' foundation was weak.
10-12: F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students lacked enthusiasm and 'proper' learning attitudes. Students had poor time management. Students were afraid of 'losing face' when they made mistakes in front of the class. They were shy as well. Students had no direction in their learning and they had no plan for their future. Therefore, they did not learn well, especially a foreign language. Students had many opportunities to enter universities, despite having a low standard of English.

For all the reasons set out in table 5.33, it can be suggested that respondents saw that students contribute significantly to their own success or failure in learning English.

All the interviewees commented (in response to questions 14 and 15: *the nature and effectiveness of students' learning methods*) that students usually used memorization to study and they only did so a short time before exams. They relied very heavily on the teacher and drilling in class, and they would only do as much as they needed to, hence their knowledge was superficial and the learning outcome was always unsatisfactory.

Table 5.34 presents the survey rating scale data for the impact of student-related factors accounting for effective English teaching and learning in Macau.

The modal score for 14 of the 22 items is category 3 ('quite important'), i.e. 24.6% of the total voting ($[(\{35.8 + 38.7 + 45.3 + 46.2 + 46.7 + 40 + 35.2 + 40 + 34 + 40.6 + 31.3 + 38.1 + 33.8\} \div 2200) \times 100]$). The modal score for 7 other items is category 4 ('very important'), i.e. 15.9% of the total voting ($[(\{38.7 + 37.7 + 39.6 + 43.4 + 37.7 + 36.8 + 45.3 + 32.1\} \div 2200) \times 100]$). Category 5 ('extremely important') has a high voting of 12.1%. If these scores in categories 3, 4 and 5 are summed, the total is 52.6% (24.6+15.9+12.1) of the total voting. This is clear evidence that the respondents attached great importance to these student-related factors in accounting for English teaching and learning effectiveness in Macau.

Table 5.34: Rating scale data summarized for student-related factors accounting for poor English learning in Macau (Section E)

Student-related factors	1 very little important	2 a little important	3 quite important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Missing
1. Shy	4 (3.8%)	18 (17%)	34 (32.1%)	41 (38.7%)	9 (8.5%)	106 (100%)	7
2. Little interest in learning anything	1 (0.9%)	19 (17.9%)	38 (35.8%)	35 (33%)	13 (12.3%)	106 (100%)	7
3. Overloaded with other subjects	5 (4.7%)	22 (20.8%)	41 (38.7%)	33 (31.1%)	5 (4.7%)	106 (100%)	7
4. Too many extra-curricular distractions	3 (2.8%)	18 (17%)	48 (45.3%)	27 (25.5%)	10 (9.4%)	106 (100%)	7
5. Limited abilities	4 (3.8%)	11 (10.4%)	49 (46.2%)	37 (34.9%)	5 (4.7%)	106 (100%)	7
6. Little incentive to learn, as they can repeat courses	5 (4.8%)	27 (25.7%)	49 (46.7%)	22 (21%)	2 (1.9%)	105 (100%)	8
7. Give little priority to English	4 (3.8%)	26 (24.8%)	42 (40%)	30 (28.6%)	3 (2.9%)	105 (100%)	8
8. Learn English badly	3 (2.9%)	16 (15.2%)	37 (35.2%)	36 (34.3%)	13 (12.4%)	105 (100%)	8
9. Given limited help in learning	5 (4.9%)	22 (21.6%)	36 (35.3%)	32 (31.4%)	7 (6.9%)	102 (100%)	11
10. Little incentive to learn English	5 (4.8%)	23 (21.9%)	42 (40%)	27 (25.7%)	8 (7.6%)	105 (100%)	8
11. Learn English young	16 (15.1%)	29 (27.4%)	26 (24.5%)	20 (18.9%)	15 (14.2%)	106 (100%)	7
12. Cannot relate English to other subjects	4 (3.5%)	18 (17%)	33 (31.1%)	40 (37.7%)	11 (10.4%)	106 (100%)	7
13. Lazy	4 (3.8%)	17 (16%)	23 (21.7%)	42 (39.6%)	20 (18.9%)	106 (100%)	7
14. Not interested in learning English	2 (1.9%)	13 (12.3%)	28 (26.4%)	46 (43.4%)	17 (16%)	106 (100%)	7
15. Poor at managing time	4 (3.8%)	23 (21.7%)	36 (34%)	28 (26.4%)	15 (14.2%)	106 (100%)	7
16. Learn what are taught	4 (3.8%)	19 (17.9%)	27 (25.5%)	40 (37.7%)	16 (15.1%)	106 (100%)	7
17. No practice outside class	3 (2.8%)	15 (14.2%)	20 (18.9%)	39 (36.8%)	29 (27.4%)	106 (100%)	7
18. Find English learning difficult		13 (12.3%)	30 (28.3%)	48 (45.3%)	15 (14.2%)	106 (100%)	7
19. English does not necessarily bring success	6 (5.7%)	18 (17%)	43 (40.6%)	28 (26.4%)	11 (10.4%)	106 (100%)	7
20. Little family support	7 (6.6%)	15 (14.2%)	33 (31.3%)	30 (28.3%)	21 (19.8%)	106 (100%)	7
21. Find English 'bookish'	7 (6.7%)	23 (21.9%)	40 (38.1%)	23 (21.9%)	12 (11.4%)	105 (100%)	8
22. Learn to pass tests and exams	2 (1.9%)	5 (4.2%)	30 (28.3%)	34 (32.1%)	25 (23.6%)	106 (100%)	7
Total (% of the grand total)	98 (4.2%)	420 (18.1%)	785 (33.8%)	738 (31.8%)	282 (12.1%)	2323 (100%)	

Item 8 ‘learn English badly’ has a bi-modal score in categories 3 and 4 (‘quite important’ and ‘very important’). The modal score for item 11 (‘learn English young’) is category 2 (‘a little important’); the percentages in its five categories are widely spread (15.1%; 27.4%; 24.5%; 18.9% and 14.2%). The highest score in category 1 (very little important) is for item 11 (15.1%), whilst, for all the other items, the highest score in category 1 is only 6.7% (item 21), suggesting that respondents may not consider learning English young to be a hindrance to teaching and learning effectiveness. Category 5 (‘extremely important’) has a high score for items 13 (‘lazy’), 14 (‘not interested’), 17 (‘no practice outside class’), 20 (‘little family support’) and 22 (‘learn to pass tests and exams’). Respondents have high weighting to the contribution of these factors (pedagogical, environmental and motivational) relating to English teaching and learning effectiveness.

The respondents attached importance to all the 22 student-related factors in accounting for teaching and learning effectiveness, shown by adding the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 for each of the items. The sum for items 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 19 and 21 amounts to 70%, with some reaching almost 80%, whilst the sum for items 2, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14, 17 and 22 amounts to over 80% or 85%. This is particularly so for items 5 (‘limited abilities’ – 85.8%), 14 (‘not interested in learning’ – 85.8%), 18 (‘find English learning difficult’ – 87.8%) and 22 (‘learn to pass tests and exams’ – 84%). The total percentages are low for item 11 (57.6%) compared to all the others, suggesting that respondents felt that ‘learning English young’ should not be exerting a negative effect on the effectiveness of English teaching and learning (affirming literature which suggests that learning languages young is advantageous). Item 6 ‘little incentive to learn as they can repeat

courses', though its total percentages only reach 68.6%, enhances the problem of low learning incentive.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 15 cases out of a possible maximum of 242 (11 x 22 items on Section E1), i.e. 6.2 % of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests as appropriate); the results show that:

- (i) those who were not trained to teach English regarded the issues of 'lack of students' interest in learning and English', 'students' laziness', 'do not practice outside class', 'students' motivation and achievement' as less important than those who had been trained; those who had been trained to teach English regarded them as 'very important' and 'extremely important' much more;
- (ii) younger teachers and those who had been teaching only a short time regarded the issue of students being given limited help in their learning as a much more important matter than other teachers;
- (iii) teachers with a degree regarded the issues of 'little priority given to English', 'not interested in English learning' and 'do not practice outside class' as much more important than those without a degree;
- (iv) The older the age group taught, the greater were seen to be the problems of according English little priority and poor teaching;

- (v) Teachers who taught in private non-religious schools regarded the issue of students only learning what they were taught as far less important than those who taught in private religious schools and government schools.

The overall messages that emerge from this section are:

- Very great importance is attached by respondents to the student-related factors in accounting for the effectiveness of English learning in Macau;
- Learning English young does not pose a hindrance to students' subsequent effectiveness in English;
- Particularly difficult problems were that students were lazy, uninterested in learning English, had no practice outside class and little family support, and learnt largely only to pass tests and examinations.
- The opportunity for students to repeat courses reduced their incentive to learn.

(b) *Motivation factors*

The interview data (question 17: *student motivation*) are presented in table 5.35. Here the issue of motivation is clearly seen as wide-ranging and significant by respondents, and pedagogical practices are seen as frequently demotivating.

Table 5.35: Student motivation

Q17: Student motivation	
1-2: P1	Students needed to have self-motivation in order to learn well.
3. P1	Students should be assessed in different ways in order to motivate their learning and give them more chances of obtaining marks.
4. P6	Students had too many outside activities.
5. P6	Students should have more experience of success for motivation.
6. P6	Students needed to be interested in English, to be more active learners.
7-9: F3 10-12: F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students studied for the sake of passing the tests and exams. Students learned well in order to build a good foundation for further studies. Students learned well because of self-interest and motivation.

Table 5.36 presents the survey rating scale data for respondents' views of the impact of motivation on English teaching and learning effectiveness in Macau.

Table 5.36: Student motivation and achievement

	1 not at all important	2 very little important	3 a little bit important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Miss -ing
Motivation	2 (2%)	16 (15.8%)	42 (41.6%)	37 (36.6%)	4 (4%)	101 (100%)	12
Motivation and job prospects	1 (0.9%)	13 (12.1%)	39 (36.4%)	42 (39.3%)	12 (11.2%)	107 (100%)	6
Motivation and non-job-related purposes	4 (3.8%)	31 (29.8%)	45 (43.3%)	23 (22.1%)	1 (1%)	104 (100%)	9
Total (% of the grand total)	7 (2.2%)	60 (19.2%)	126 (40.4%)	102 (32.7%)	17 (5.4%)	312 (100%)	

The modal score for two of the three items is category 3 ('a little bit important'); item 2 has a modal score in category 4 ('very important'). The modal scores in category 3 accounts for 28.3% of the total voting ($[(41.6+43.3) \div 300] \times 100$), and the modal score in category 4 accounts for 13.1% of the total voting ($\{39.3 \div 300\} \times 100$). If the scores for both categories are added, they account for 73.1% of the total voting ($(40.4+32.7)$, i.e. nearly three quarters of the respondents attached importance to motivation and its contribution to English teaching and learning effectiveness. If the score for category 5 ('extremely important') of 5.4% of the total voting ($[(4+11.2+1) \div 300] \times 100$) is added to categories 3 and 4, they account for almost 80% of the total voting, indicating the

importance given to the role of motivation in English teaching and learning. Category 1 ('not at all important') gained the lowest voting of all the three items (2.2%).

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 5 cases out of a possible maximum of 33 (11 x 3 items on Section E2), i.e. 15.2% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests); the results show that:

- Teachers who had been trained to teach English regarded the issue of student motivation and achievement as much more important than other teachers;
- Teachers in private non-religious schools accorded the issue of student motivation and achievement to have lesser importance in comparison with those from government schools and private religious schools.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where variables in Section E were correlated with variables from Section C, using Spearman's *rho*, as these variables are related to motivation. There were several correlations of note:

- (a) The emphasis on memorization correlates strongly with all aspects of poor performance (reading, speaking, listening, writing);
- (b) Poor learning styles and poor teaching methods correlate significantly with every aspect of, students' poor English (reading, speaking, listening, writing);

- (c) The significance accorded to avoiding loss of face in Chinese culture may contribute to poor performance;
- (d) Time management and the ability to make students less lazy are exacerbated by the opportunity for students to repeat courses; students do not seem to be *required* to manage their time well;
- (e) The inability to use English throughout the school or outside the schools, and the lack of *need* to use English for University entrance are important problems;
- (f) There is a problem: students tend to learn only what they are taught, and little else;
- (g) Students frequently regard English as too ‘bookish’.

The overall message that emerges from this section is that motivation, regardless of its reasons or purposes, is seen to be a very important factor in accounting for student effectiveness in English in Macau.

5.2.2.5 *Methodology-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of teaching methodology-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) *Teaching methods*

All the interview respondents raised the same issues (question 9: *teaching methods*), that:

- (a) teaching was mostly conducted using a didactic approach as teachers had a very tight

syllabus to cover within the fixed number of periods, though they sometimes utilized visual aids and group activities to arouse students' interest. Didactic methods gave them more control over the class, which was necessary as classes were usually big (between 30-50, rising to 60); (b) whenever these teachers taught grammar, they relied heavily on the grammar-translation method. They used mostly Chinese (as much as 80%) to explain grammar, as that would make it easier for students to understand the explanation.

Table 5.37 presents the survey rating scale data of the most frequently used teaching methods used in Macau.

Table 5.37: The teaching methods used for English teaching in Macau.

	1 never	2 rarely	3 occasionally	4 often	5 very often	Total	Missing
1. Didactic teaching	2 (1.8%)	21 (19.1%)	56 (50.9%)	22 (20%)	9 (8.2%)	110 (100%)	3
2. Whole-class teaching		4 (3.7%)	28 (25.7%)	53 (48.6%)	24 (22%)	109 (100%)	4
3. Learning through non-text-booked-based practical task	1 (0.9%)	18 (16.4%)	52 (47.3%)	33 (30%)	6 (5.5%)	110 (100%)	3
4. Use of visual aids		27 (24.3%)	54 (48.6%)	26 (23.4%)	4 (3.6%)	111 (100%)	2
5. Text-book-based learning	1 (0.9%)	13 (11.7%)	42 (37.8%)	36 (32.4%)	19 (17.1%)	111 (100%)	2
6. Group activities	1 (0.9%)	24 (21.8%)	56 (50.9%)	23 (20.9%)	6 (5.5%)	110 (100%)	3
7. Grammar-translation	5 (4.5%)	22 (19.8%)	39 (35.1%)	39 (35.1%)	6 (5.4%)	111 (100%)	2
8. Oral activities		19 (17.1%)	45 (40.5%)	37 (33.3%)	10 (9%)	111 (100%)	2
9. Individual activities	2 (1.8%)	34 (30.6%)	37 (33.3%)	31 (27.9%)	7 (6.3%)	111 (100%)	2
10. Project work	9 (8.1%)	38 (34.2%)	50 (45%)	11 (9.9%)	3 (2.7%)	111 (100%)	2
11. Student-chosen work	15 (13.9%)	40 (37%)	39 (36.1%)	12 (11.1%)	2 (1.9%)	108 (100%)	5
Total (% of grand total)	36 (3%)	260 (21.4%)	498 (41.1%)	323 (26.6%)	96 (7.9%)	1213 (100%)	

The modal score for 9 of the 11 items is category 3 ('occasionally'), i.e. 35.4% of the total score ($[\{50.9+ 47.3+ 48.6+ 37.8+ 50.9+ 35.1+ 40.5+ 33.3+ 45\} \div 1,100] \times 100$); the modal score for item 2 ('whole class teaching') is category 4 ('often') – 48.6%. Item 7 ('grammar translation') has a bi-modal score in category 3 ('occasionally') and 4 ('often'). Item 11 ('student-chosen work') has a bi-modal score in category 2 ('rarely') and 3 ('occasionally'). Voting is high in categories 1 ('never'), 2 ('rarely') and 3 ('occasionally') for item 11, i.e. 89% (13.9+ 37+ 36.1) for that item, clearly indicating that respondents did not usually use 'students' chosen work' in their teaching. If the percentages for categories 3, 4, and 5 are summed in each of items 1 ('didactic teaching'), 2 ('whole class teaching'), 5 ('text-book-based learning'), 7 ('grammar-translation'), the total in each of these items range from 71.7% (item 1) to 96% (item 2), indicating that teaching relied heavily on traditional teacher- and text-book-based methods. Further, the voting for these items (1, 2, 5, 7) in category 1 ('never') is either zero or extremely low; the highest is 1.8% for item 1; teaching is mainly teacher-centered.

When the percentages for categories 4 ('often') and 5 ('very often') are summed for each of items 3 ('learning through non-text-booked-based practical task'), 4 ('use of visual aids'), 6 ('group activities'), 8 ('oral activities'), 9 ('individual activities'), 10 ('project work') and 11 ('student-chosen work'), the highest total for each of the items is only 35.5% (item 3), and drops to 12.6% (item 10). In item 3, this figure of 35.5% is slightly over only half of the sum of the percentages for categories 1 ('never'), 2 ('rarely') and 3 ('occasionally') for this item (64.4), indicating that learning is mostly text-book based.

The lowest total for the sum of categories 4 and 5 is for item 10 (12.6%), which shows that 'project work' is seldom utilized, whilst the sum of categories 1, 2 and 3 for this item 10 is 87.3%, indicating that, at best, project work is used only occasionally, and very often is used either rarely or not at all. The high frequencies in the category 'rarely' are for items 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11; item 11 ('students' chosen work') has the highest score here. Clearly student-centered and task-based activities are much less used for the teaching and learning of English. The most the respondents made use of such approaches was 'occasionally', as 9 modal scores of the 11 items occurred in category 3 ('occasionally').

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 7 cases out of a possible maximum of 121 (11 x 11 items on Section F5), i.e. 5.8% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests); the results show that:

- (i) Teachers with a higher degree used project work much more than others;
- (ii) Teachers with a degree used group work more than other teachers;
- (iii) The younger the teacher, the more they used textbooks;
- (iv) Textbook-based learning was used the least frequently in government schools;
- (v) Private religious schools used individual activities more than other schools;
- (vi) Private non-religious schools used project work least.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where all the variables in Section F were intercorrelated using Spearman's *rho* in order to identify important associations of factors. The picture presented by these correlations shows:

- (a) student involvement and engagement are very largely absent; student-centred, practical and oral learning are confined to project work, and individual activities and group work under-represented in the teachers' styles and students' curricular diets;
- (b) substantial use of textbook-driven, rote learning, drill and memorization;
- (c) the over-use of 'spoon-feeding' students;
- (d) the heavy use of didactic methods, particularly with grammar-translation methods;
- (e) Insufficient opportunities for student to speak English, to use it meaningfully, and to think in English and the limited emphasis on understanding;
- (f) The widespread use of Chinese in English lessons;
- (g) The under-use of oral work in English lessons.

(b) *The Effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau*

The interview data (question 6: *the effectiveness of English teaching in Macau*) are presented in table 5.38, and rehearse those found throughout this chapter.

Table 5.38: The effectiveness of English teaching in Macau

Q6: The effectiveness of English teaching in Macau	
1-3: P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students neither understood written or spoken English nor were able to speak or write very well. Though students started learning English very young, their standard was still very low as they could not really understand or use English.
4-6: P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students had a low standard as they could not read, write or speak English. They used memorization to learn and thus the English knowledge was very superficial and confined to limited vocabulary.
7-9: F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the whole students' standard was low. English teaching and learning were not very successful. Even with a poor knowledge of English students still managed to get jobs. Macau was not an international city, English was not really that important even if students did not learn well.
10. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English teaching and learning were not very effective as students were not working hard and they resorted to memorization to learn English. However, students managed to get into universities.
11. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students had learned at least some basic knowledge about English.
12. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was effective to some extent as some students themselves became English teachers, having finished their university education.

Table 5.39 presents the survey rating scale data for the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau.

Table 5.39: English teaching effectiveness

Effectiveness of English teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Very ineffective	5	4.7%
Ineffective	20	18.7%
A little bit effective	71	66.4%
Very effective	11	10.3%
Extremely effective		
Total	107	100%
Missing	6	
Total	113	

Only around 10% of the survey respondents regarded English teaching in Macau being 'very effective' whilst around 90% of the respondents believed that it was 'a little bit effective' or worse. Indeed 23.4% of respondents (4.7+18.7) recorded voting in the two categories of ineffective. The modal score is for 'a little bit effective' and the data are

skewed towards levels lower than that. No voting was recorded for category 5 ('extremely effective').

The overall message that emerges from this section are that: (a) very few respondents regarded the teaching of English in Macau as being very effective; (b) some 90% of respondents regarded the teaching of English in Macau as 'a little bit effective' or worse;

(c) *Factors contributing to poor English teaching and learning in Macau*

All the interviewees stated that Macau students started learning English at a very young age and they should be good at it. However, maybe students were too young to learn English and to understand what they were taught. The respondents all commented that individual schools in Macau had great autonomy over syllabus design, yet some syllabuses were too full to be covered within the limited time span, and it was hard to make adjustments, and students could not cope with the learning requirements. This put pressure on both teachers and students. Some schools made students learn other foreign languages apart from English, and that worsened the learning of English. Hence students did not learn well, despite years of learning English. Further interview data (question 27: *factors contributing to ineffective learning*) are presented in table 5.40. It can be seen in table 5.40 that the issues here, also rehearsed elsewhere in these data, indicate that the problems lie in many fields.

Table 5.40: Factors contributing to ineffective learning

Q27: Factors contributing to ineffective learning	
1. P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learned too many subjects. • Students learned English in a Chinese-speaking environment.
2-3: P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students only learned what they were taught and they did have the chance to practice the English they had learnt. • There was not enough time to cover the syllabus. • Students only learned what they were taught.
4-6: P6	
7-9: F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' learning attitudes and motivation were low, leading to poor learning. Weak foundation contributed to their learning ineffectiveness. • Teaching methods were boring; students found it difficult and boring, and could not build links between English and other subjects.
10. F5	Learning was no longer the only means of survival, so there was no need to work hard at school.
11. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students had very little support from parents when they had learning problems, especially with a foreign language. • Chinese teachers had been labeled as non-English speakers, so students refused to use English in front of a Chinese teacher, thus depriving themselves of an opportunity to practice using English.
12. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were sometimes taught by non-English major teachers, thus students' foundation had not been properly built up. • Teachers had to cover a very rich syllabus within a short time, thus they could not teach in depth. • Teaching was exam-oriented and students were not really learning.

5.2.2.6 *Society-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of society-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) A Chinese society

The interview data (question 26: *the effects of Macau society and Chinese culture on English learning*) are presented in table 5.41, and indicate that the society and culture in Macau, on a large scale, do not lend themselves to the learning of English.

Table 5.41: The effects of Macau society and Chinese culture on English learning

Q26: The effects of Macau society and Chinese culture on English learning	
1. P1	Portuguese was more important than English, as Macau had been a Portuguese colony for a very long time.
2-3: P1	Chinese students were too shy to use English. Many refused to use English with a Chinese-speaking teacher.
4-5: P6	
6. P6	Students preferred to spend time on social activities rather than studying, especially studying a foreign subject.
7. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All subjects were taught in Chinese except English. There is no chance for students to practice English inside and outside class.
8. F3	Portuguese used to be more important than English.
9. F3	Students still managed to find jobs without English, i.e. English was not that important in the local society.
10. F5	
11. F5	Students preferred to spend time on their social life.
12. F5	There was no English-speaking environment for the students.

Table 5.42 indicates survey respondents' views on the effects of the local society and culture on the learning of English in Macau.

Table 5.42: The effects of Macau society and culture on teaching and learning of English

	1 not at all important	2 very little importance	3 a little important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Miss -ing
1. Portuguese is more important than English in Macau	29 (26.1%)	30 (27%)	34 (30.6%)	13 (11.7%)	5 (4.5%)	111 (100%)	2
2. Chinese students are shy to use English		9 (8.1%)	39 (35.1%)	51 (45.9%)	12 (10.8%)	111 (100%)	2
3. Social lives do not require English	1 (0.9%)	11 (9.9%)	31 (27.9%)	45 (40.5%)	23 (20.7%)	111 (100%)	2
4. All other subjects are taught in Chinese		6 (5.5%)	46 (41.8%)	47 (42.7%)	11 (10%)	110 (100%)	3
5. English is not needed for jobs	2 (1.8%)	18 (16.4%)	58 (52.7%)	30 (27.3%)	2 (1.8%)	110 (100%)	3
6. Macau is not an English environment	1 (0.9%)	9 (8.2%)	34 (30.9%)	42 (38.2%)	24 (21.8%)	110 (100%)	3
7. Students do not use English outside school	1 (0.9%)	4 (3.6%)	25 (22.5%)	58 (52.3%)	23 (20.7%)	111 (100%)	2
Total (% of grand total)	34 (4.4%)	87 (11.2%)	267 (34.5%)	286 (37%)	100 (12.9%)	774 (100%)	

The modal score for five of the seven items is category 4 ('very important'). Item 4 ('all other subjects are taught in Chinese') has a bi-modal score in categories 3 and 4 ('a little important' and 'very important'), suggesting that survey respondents had mixed opinions on the importance of this item and its effect on the teaching and learning of English. All the scores for item 1 are skewed towards categories 1, 2 and 3 ('not at all important', 'very little importance' and 'a little important'), indicating that the respondents attached little importance to the impact of Portuguese on the teaching and learning of English. Item 5 'English is not needed for jobs' has the highest modal score (52.7%) of all other items in category 3 ('a little important') and 4 ('very important').

The modal score of category 4 ('very important') for items 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 accounts for 37% of the total voting ($(\{45.9+40.5+42.7+38.2+52.3\}) \div 700 \times 100$), indicating that these items, for the respondents, are very important for the teaching and learning of English. However, if all percentages in category 3 are summed, the total voting comes up to 34.5% ($(\{30.6+35.1+27.9+41.8+52.7+30.9+22.5\}) \div 700 \times 100$), which is very close to that of category 4. Altogether categories 3 and 4 account for 71.5% (34.5+37) of the total scores. Respondents attached importance to all the seven items as exerting an impact on the teaching and learning of English. The overall total of category 1 'not at all important' is low, 4.4% of the total voting ($(\{26.1+0.9+1.8+0.9+0.9\}) \div 700 \times 100$), indicating that the respondents attached importance to their choices.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11),

there were 14 cases out of a possible maximum of 77 (11 x 7 items in section L) i.e. 18.2% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney or Kruskal-Wallis tests); the results show that:

- (a) Teachers who had been trained to teach English generally regarded the issues of 'Macau is not an English environment' and 'students do not use English outside school' as more important than those who had not been trained to teach English;
- (b) Teachers in the younger age groups and who had been teaching a short time regarded Portuguese as generally more important than English in comparison to those in older age groups and who had been teaching a long time;
- (c) The higher the teacher's qualification (generally and specifically in English), the more importance was given to 'social lives do not need English in Macau', 'students do not use English outside school' and 'Macau is not an English environment';
- (d) Teachers in English medium schools regarded the issue of 'English is not needed for jobs' as more important than those in Chinese medium schools.

The overall messages from this section are that respondents said that:

- the local society and culture, which are mainly Chinese, are affecting the effectiveness of teaching and learning of English in Macau;
- the influence of Portuguese is declining, and the significance of English is rising;
- Chinese students are shy to use English, and this is an very important matter;
- There is a perception that social lives and employment in Macau do not need English;

- the environment in Macau is largely not supportive of English, and English is largely unused outside school.

5.2.2.7 *School-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of school-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) *Organizational factors (time-tabling and class size)*

All the interview respondents said that (question 20: *organizational factors*):

- (a) students generally learnt better in the morning, but it was impossible to schedule all English classes then as there were other subjects to consider;
- (b) it was impossible to do anything about the large class size owing to space and financial considerations;
- (c) it would be good to have more periods for English lessons, but time constraints could not be overcome;
- (d) students had too many subjects to study; (e) mixed-ability teaching at schools predominated, as streaming labeled students and hurt their self-esteem.

Table 5.43 presents survey respondent data on class size as an important factor.

Table 5.43: Class sizes in Macau

	Size of the smallest class	Size of the largest class	Size of the average class
Class size	Frequency/Percentage	Frequency/Percentage	Frequency/Percentage
Less than 30	21 (18.8%)	7 (13.5%)	15 (13.5%)
31-40	12 (10.7%)	17 (12.6%)	14 (12.4%)
41-50	56 (50%)	35 (48.6%)	54 (48.6%)
51-60	22 (19.6%)	41 (23.4%)	26 (23.4%)
Over 60	1 (0.9%)	11 (1.8%)	2 (1.8%)
Total	112 (100%)	111 (100%)	111 (100%)
Missing	1	2	2
Total	113	113	113

Over 70% (50 + 19.6 + 0.9) of classes have over 40 students as their smallest size. Less than 20% of the smallest classes contain fewer than 30 students and a little more than 20% contain more than 50 students. Over two thirds of the students (70.5%) are in classes whose smallest size is over 40 students. 13.5% of teachers have classes whose largest size is less than 30 students and more than 85% (12.6 + 48.6 + 23.4 + 1.8) of teachers have between 30 and 60+ students in their largest classes. Nearly three quarters of the students (73.8%) are in classes whose largest size is over 40 students. Less than 14% of classes have less than 30 students as an average; 86.2% (12.4 + 48.6 + 23.4 + 1.8) of classes have between 30-60+ students, and nearly three quarters of the students (73.8%) are in classes whose average largest size is over 40 students. The modal average size of classes is 41-50 (48.6%), but, as is plain from the table, the distributions are skewed enormously to large average-sized classes.

Teachers work with large classes, whose average size is between 40 and 50 students, and where classes of 40+ students are found in around three-quarters of the classes in Macau. When class size was crosstabulated with all of the nominal variables of the sample, there was no statistical significance found in any of the distributions except one: school type.

Here the largest classes tended to be in the private rather than government schools, with the largest average classes being the private non-religious schools.

Table 5.44 presents the survey rating scale data on the respondents' views on school-related factors.

Table 5.44: Respondents' views on organization-related factors affecting English in Macau.

	1 very weak	2 weak	3 a little strong	4 strong	5 very strong	Total	Miss- ing
1. Large class size	4 (3.7%)	13 (12.1%)	20 (18.7%)	28 (26.2%)	42 (39.3%)	107 (100%)	6
2. Large classes limit oral work		11 (10.2%)	20 (18.5%)	41 (38%)	36 (33.3%)	108 (100%)	5
3. Large classes limit group work	3 (2.8%)	9 (8.4%)	28 (26.2%)	43 (40.2%)	24 (22.4%)	107 (100%)	6
4. Large classes lead to didactic methods	1 (0.9%)	11 (10.3%)	39 (36.4%)	40 (37.4%)	16 (15%)	107 (100%)	6
5. Large classes lead to passive learning	1 (0.9%)	7 (6.5%)	32 (29.9%)	39 (36.4%)	28 (26.2%)	107 (100%)	6
6. Large classes lead to text-book based learning	2 (1.9%)	7 (6.5%)	34 (31.8%)	39 (36.4%)	25 (23.4%)	107 (100%)	6
7. Large classes lead to boring teaching	4 (3.7%)	13 (12%)	35 (32.4%)	41 (38%)	15 (13.9%)	108 (100%)	5
8. Poor time-tabling for English	1 (0.9%)	17 (15.9%)	55 (51.4%)	23 (21.5%)	11 (10.3%)	107 (100%)	6
9. Teaching mixed-ability groups		14 (13.1%)	43 (40.2%)	33 (30.8%)	17 (15.9%)	107 (100%)	6
Total (% of the grand total)	16 (1.7%)	102 (10.6%)	306 (31.7%)	327 (33.9%)	214 (22.1%)	965 (100%)	

The modal score for 7 out of the 9 items is category 4 ('strong'), i.e. 28.1% of the total voting ($[(26.2 + 38 + 40.2 + 37.4 + 36.4 + 36.4 + 38) \div 900] \times 100$); the modal score for items 8 ('poor timetabling for English') and 9 ('teaching mixed-ability groups') is category 3 ('a little strong'), i.e. 10.2% of the total voting ($[(51.4 + 40.2) \div 900] \times 100$). Item 4 ('large classes lead to didactic methods') has a bi-modal score in categories 3 ('a little strong') and 4 ('strong'), i.e. the respondents attached importance to this item. Items 1 ('large classes'), 2 ('large classes limit oral work'), 3 ('large classes limit group

work'), 5 ('large classes lead to passive learning'), and 6 ('large classes lead to textbook-based learning') have very high scores in category 5 ('very strong'), ranging from 39.3% (item 1) to 22.4% (item 3), i.e. respondents attached great importance to the issue of large classes as an essential organizational factor in English effectiveness.

Item 8 ('poor time-tabling') receives the lowest score in category 5 (10.3%), nevertheless it is a high score and, when the scores are taken together with other scores in categories 3 and 4, the total percentages still amount to 83.2%, indicating that, for the respondents, this is a very important factor. When categories 4 and 5 are summed for each item, item 1 ('large class size') receives a score of 65.5%, item 2 ('large classes limit oral work') receives a score of 71.3%, item 3 ('large classes limit group work') receives a score of 62.6%, and item 5 ('large classes lead to passive learning') receives a score of 62.6% – exceptionally high scores, indicating that these four items have very strong importance.

Survey respondents attached considerable importance to all these 9 organizational factors which can account for teaching and learning effectiveness, as, when the total percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 are added together, the total accounts for 87.7% of the total voting. The sum of the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 for all the 9 items ranges from 83.2% (item 8, 'poor timetabling for English') to 92.5% (item 5, 'large classes lead to passive learning'). The high total in category 5 ('very strong') (22.5%) underlines the importance of these factors. All 9 items had a very low voting in category 1 ('very weak') (1.7% of the total voting), indicating the limited importance given to this category by respondents. Similarly, the total for category 2 ('weak') for the 9 items comes to only

10.6% of the total voting. Overall, the scores are skewed towards the upper categories 3, 4 and 5, indicating the great importance given to all these 9 organization-related factors.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 14 cases out of a possible maximum of 99 (11 x 9 items on Section H), i.e. 14.1% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests); the results show that:

- (a) Teachers in the age group 40-49 considered the issue of 'limited group work' to be a 'very strong' matter in accounting for English effectiveness in Macau, whilst other age groups tended not to feel so strongly about it;
- (b) Teachers who had been teaching for 1-15 years considered the issue of 'large classes using largely textbook learning' to be a 'very strong' matter in accounting for English effectiveness in Macau, whilst those who had been teaching for longer tended not to feel so strongly about it;
- (c) Teachers with a degree considered the issues of 'large classes with little oral work', 'timetabling', and 'teaching mixed ability classes' to be more important than non-degree-holding teachers in accounting for effectiveness of English teaching in Macau.

The overall messages that emerge from this section are:

- All of the items mentioned are seen as having a very important contribution to make to the effectiveness of English in Macau;
- The problem of large classes is seen to be important, resulting, at times, in limited opportunities for oral work and group work;
- Large classes also lead to largely passive and textbook-based learning;
- Timetabling is also seen as an important problem.

5.2.2.8 *Assessment-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of assessment-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

The interview data (question 18 and 19: *assessment-related factors, self-assessment and learning effectiveness*) are presented in table 5.45, and show that respondents felt that: traditional tests and examinations had considerable strengths as well as weaknesses, that they exerted a huge effect on teaching and learning of English in Macau, and on students, and that newer forms of assessment were largely absent. Learning was passive.

Table 5.45: Assessment-related factors in English effectiveness

Q18&19: Assessment-related factors, self-assessment and learning effectiveness	
1-3: P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests and exams were effective to find out if students had really learnt. • Tests and exams were inflexible as they were mainly used to test students' book knowledge. • They gave students pressure, who only studied in order to pass. • Students forgot what they had studied after the tests and exams. • It was very hard for students to be able to assess themselves, and they were very rarely involved in assessing their learning progress and difficulties. • Teachers had no knowledge about other means of assessments.
4. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' self-esteem was greatly affected by too many failing experiences.
5. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests and exams were fairer means to assess students.
6. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were very often given a short quiz to see if they had learnt and paid attention in class.
7. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students resented tests and exams, particularly weak students. • No self-assessment was used. • Sometimes, project work was used to assess students, but it would be hard to find out which student had/had not worked, so tests and exams would give a better picture of students' learning.
8. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students would be forced to study for the sake of passing the tests and exams. At least they had learned something.
9. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments relied mainly on tests and exams, but class participation was also counted. • There was very little self-assessment.
10. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests and exams were mostly used. • There was no self-assessment.
11. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments relied mainly on tests and exams. • Project work wasted resources and it was hard to tell which student/s had worked and which had not.
12. F5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests and exams were mostly used. • There was no self-assessment.

Table 5.46 presents the survey rating scale data of the assessment-related factors, and indicates the large extent to which English learning may be affected by using tests and examinations as the sole assessment method

The scores show bi-modality in categories 3 and 4. The voting for category 5 is much higher than in other tables. The categories 'quite a lot' and 'a very great deal' amount to

well over half of the total (57.8%), which suggests that respondents recognized the extent of relying on tests and examinations as major assessment methods.

Table 5.46: Extent of assessment solely controlled by tests/exams

Category Number	Descriptor	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not at all	1	1%
2	Very little	3	3.1%
3	A little	37	38.1%
4	Quite a lot	38	39.2%
5	A very great deal	18	18.6%
	Total	97	100%
	Missing	16	
	Total	113	

When statistics were calculated to determine whether the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 2 cases out of a possible maximum of 11 (11 x 1 items on Section I1), i.e. 18.2% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Kruskal-Wallis test. Teachers with a degree felt that 'assessment was solely controlled by tests and examinations' to be a much stronger matter than those without a degree, and those teaching Forms 4-6, perhaps naturally (given the pressure for university entrance), felt this much more strongly than those teaching younger students.

Table 5.47 presents the survey rating scale data on respondents' views of problems concerning tests and examinations for English in Macau.

Table 5.47: Testing-related factors in English learning effectiveness in Macau

Problems concerning tests	1 very weak	2 weak	3 quite strong	4 strong	5 very strong	Total	Missing
1. Too many tests / exams	3 (1%)	13 (3.1%)	34 (38.1%)	44 (39.2%)	14 (18.6%)	108 (100%)	5
2. Tests/exams dominate curriculum	1 (0.9%)	8 (7.5%)	41 (38.3%)	37 (34.6%)	20 (18.7%)	107 (100%)	6
3. Great emphasis on tests/exams		7 (6.5%)	36 (33.6%)	46 (43%)	18 (16.8%)	107 (100%)	6
4. Little emphasis on other forms of assessment	1 (0.9%)	10 (9.3%)	47 (43.9%)	39 (36.4%)	10 (9.3%)	107 (100%)	6
5. Insufficient self-assessment		7 (6.6%)	46 (43.4%)	44 (41.5%)	9 (8.5%)	106 (100%)	7
6. Insufficient self-diagnosis		9 (8.3%)	53 (49.1%)	36 (33.3%)	10 (9.3%)	108 (100%)	5
7. Students forget things after tests/exams		6 (5.6%)	37 (34.3%)	35 (32.4%)	30 (27.8%)	108 (100%)	5
8. Low motivation due to many tests/exams		8 (7.6%)	42 (40%)	36 (34.3%)	19 (18.1%)	105 (100%)	8
9. Self-esteem suffers		5 (4.8%)	47 (44.8%)	42 (40%)	11 (10.5%)	105 (100%)	8
10. Students resent tests/exams		10 (9.5%)	43 (41%)	37 (35.2%)	15 (14.3%)	105 (100%)	8
11. Teachers resent tests/exams	2 (1.9%)	16 (15.2%)	53 (50.5%)	28 (26.7%)	6 (5.7%)	105 (100%)	8
Total (% of the grand total)	7 (0.6%)	99 (8.5%)	479 (40.9%)	424 (36.2%)	162 (13.8%)	1171 (100%)	

The modal score for 9 out of the 11 items is category 3 ('quite strong'), i.e. 35% of the total voting ($[(\{38.3+ 43.9+ 43.4+ 49.1+ 34.3+ 40+ 44.8+ 41+ 50.5\} \div 1,100)] \times 100$), whilst the modal score for items 1 and 3 is category 4 ('strong'), i.e. 7.5% of the total voting ($[(\{39.2+ 43\} \div 1,100)] \times 100$). All 11 items were seen as important. Item 1 ('too many tests/exams') has a bi-modal score in categories 3 ('quite strong') and 4 ('strong'), indicating that the respondents attached great importance to this item. Similarly item 5 ('insufficient self-assessment') demonstrates some bi-modality (categories 3 and 4). Items 1 ('too many tests/exams'), 2 ('tests/exams dominate curriculum'), 3 ('great emphasis on tests/exams'), 7 ('students forget things after tests/exams') and 8 ('low motivation due to many tests and exams') receive high voting in category 5 ('very strong'), and item 7 has received the highest voting in this category (27.8%).

The sum of all the items in category 5 is 13.8% of the total voting, i.e. the respondents attached great importance to all the items in this category. The sum of the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 for items 1-3, 5-10 and 11 ranges from over 90% (item 10, 'students resent tests/exams') (90.5%) to 95.9% (item 1, 'too many tests/exams'); items 4 ('little emphasis on other forms of assessment') (89.6%) and 11 ('teachers resent tests/exams') (82.9%) receive less than 90%. The sums of categories 3, 4 and 5 range between over 80% and almost 90%, which is very high. When the total percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 are summed, they amount to 90.9% of the total voting. If categories 4 and 5 are summed for each item then item 1 ('too many tests/ exams') receives a score of 57.8%, item 3 ('great emphasis on tests/exams') receives a score of 59.8%, and item 7 ('students forget things after tests/exams') receives a score of 60.2%. The sum of all the items in categories 4 and 5 ranges from the lowest of 32.4% (item 11, 'teachers resent tests/exams') to over 60% (item 7, 'students forget things after tests/exams'), indicating that the respondents recognized the importance of all these assessment-related factors for the effectiveness of English teaching and learning.

All 11 items had a very low voting in category 1 ('very weak') and category 2 ('weak'); the percentages for the two categories added together only amounts to 9.1% of the total voting. Overall, the scores are clearly skewed towards the upper categories 3, 4 and 5, indicating the considerable importance given to all the 11 assessment-related factors in accounting for English teaching and learning effectiveness.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 10 cases out of a possible maximum of 110 (10 x 11 items on Section I2), i.e. 9.1% of cases), where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests), the results show that:

- (a) Teachers who were trained to teach English felt the issue of 'great emphasis on tests and examinations' overwhelmingly more than those not trained to teach English to be an important issue;
- (b) Teachers with a degree felt the issues of 'little emphasis on other assessments', 'insufficient self-assessment', 'insufficient self-diagnosis' and 'teachers resent tests and examinations' to be much stronger than those without a degree.

Table 5.48 presents the survey rating scale data for the respondents' views of the advantages of tests and examinations on effective English learning in Macau. The modal score for all the 8 items is category 3 ('quite useful'), i.e. 47.6% of the total voting ($[(50.9 + 39.1 + 50 + 50.9 + 52.7 + 48.2 + 40 + 48.6) \div 800] \times 100$). Item 7 ('are syllabus-based') is bi-modal in the categories 'quite useful' and 'very useful'. The modal score for items 1 ('ensure students have learnt') (50.9%), 3 ('find out what students have learnt') (50%), 4 ('test book knowledge') (50.9%) and 5 ('objective') (52.7%) is either 50% or slightly over 50% in category 3. Overall, all the items in category 3 received very high voting, indicating the importance given to all of them. Similarly, the voting is high in category 4 ('very useful'), for all 8 items, and the sum for them is 31.2% of the

total voting. The items in category 2 ('a little useful'), especially item 5 ('are objective') which receives the highest voting (20.9%), also received high voting.

Table 5.48: Respondents' views on the advantages of tests/examinations

Tests and exams	1 not at all useful	2 a little useful	3 quite useful	4 very useful	5 essential	Total	Miss- ing
1. Ensure students have learnt		15 (13.6%)	56 (50.9%)	30 (27.3%)	9 (8.2%)	110 (100%)	3
2. Make students learn		21 (19.1%)	43 (39.1%)	41 (37.3%)	5 (4.5%)	110 (100%)	3
3. Find out what students have learned		12 (10.9%)	55 (50%)	32 (29.1%)	11 (10%)	110 (100%)	3
4. Test book knowledge		16 (14.5%)	56 (50.9%)	32 (29.1%)	6 (5.5%)	110 (100%)	3
5. Are objective	3 (2.7%)	23 (20.9%)	58 (52.7%)	25 (22.7%)	1 (0.9%)	110 (100%)	3
6. Fairly assess individuals		19 (17.3%)	53 (48.2%)	36 (32.7%)	2 (1.8%)	110 (100%)	3
7. Are syllabus- related		22 (20%)	44 (40%)	42 (38.2%)	2 (1.8%)	110 (100%)	3
8. Teach students to cope with tests/exams		11 (10.3%)	52 (48.6%)	36 (33.6%)	8 (7.5%)	107 (100%)	6
Total (% of grand total)	3 (3%)	139 (15.8%)	417 (47.5%)	274 (31.2%)	44 (5%)	877 (100%)	

If categories 4 and 5 are totalled for each item, the sums range from 76.4% (item 2, 'make students learn') to 80.9% (item 6, 'fairly assess individuals'), indicating the importance the respondents attached to these factors. The sum of the percentages for categories 3 and 4 is 78.7% of the total voting, indicating their overall importance. If categories 2, 3 and 4 are totalled, the sum amounts to 94.5% of the total voting. Survey respondents attached great importance to the advantages of tests and examinations. Overall, tests and examinations, though not entirely essential, were seen as useful or very useful.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 6 cases out of a possible maximum of 88 (11 x 8 items on Section I3), i.e. 6.8% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Kruskal-Wallis test); the results show that:

- (a) Teachers with a degree felt the issues 'test book knowledge' and 'tests and examinations are fair and objective' to be a much greater advantage than those without a degree;
- (b) Teachers in private religious schools felt the issue of 'ensure students study' to be a greater advantage than did those in government and private non-religious schools but the issue of 'find out what students have learnt' to be a lesser advantage than those in these latter two types of school.

Table 5.49 presents the survey rating scale data of the respondents' views on the disadvantages of tests and examinations on effective English learning in Macau. The modal score for 13 out of the 15 items is category 3 ('a little disadvantage'), 37.5% of the total voting ($[\{54.1+45.5+46.8+30.6+33.9+36+44+38.7+34.5+51.4+47.3+ 61.3+ 38.2\} \div 1,500] \times 100$); the modal score for item 8 ('students/teachers do not know about other forms of assessment') is category 4 ('very little disadvantage'), i.e 3.1% of the total voting ($[46.8 \div 1,500] \times 100$), indicating the importance given to this matter. The modal score for items 2 ('only test book knowledge') and 5 ('students study to pass') is category 2 ('quite a disadvantage'), 4.7% of the total voting $[\{39.6+ 30.6\} \div 1500] \times 100$). Item 5

Table 5.49: Respondents' views on the disadvantages of tests/examinations

Tests and exams	1 a very great disadvantage	2 quite a disadvantage	3 a little disadvantage	4 very little disadvantage	5 no disadvantage	Total	Missing
1. Are inflexible	2 (1.8%)	36 (32.4%)	60 (54.1%)	7 (6.3%)	6 (5.4%)	111 (100%)	2
2. Only test book knowledge	6 (5.4%)	44 (39.6%)	34 (30.6%)	24 (21.6%)	3 (2.7%)	111 (100%)	2
3. Put undue pressure on students	5 (4.5%)	30 (27.3%)	50 (45.5%)	21 (19.1%)	4 (3.6%)	110 (100%)	3
4. Put undue pressure on teachers	4 (3.6%)	27 (24.3%)	52 (46.8%)	26 (23.4%)	2 (1.8%)	111 (100%)	2
5. Cause students to study in order to pass	15 (13.9%)	33 (30.6%)	33 (30.6%)	18 (16.7%)	9 (8.3%)	108 (100%)	5
6. Make students forget after tests/exams	14 (12.5%)	33 (29.5%)	38 (33.9%)	22 (19.6%)	5 (4.5%)	112 (100%)	1
7. Make students uninvolved in self-assessment	8 (7.2%)	34 (30.6%)	40 (36%)	25 (22.5%)	4 (3.6%)	111 (100%)	2
8. Predominate; students/teachers do not know about other forms of assessment		4 (3.6%)	27 (24.3%)	52 (46.8%)	28 (25.2%)	111 (100%)	2
9. Build in failure	6 (5.5%)	32 (29.4%)	48 (44%)	18 (16.5%)	5 (4.6%)	109 (100%)	4
10. Cause students to resent them	5 (4.5%)	37 (33.3%)	43 (38.7%)	25 (22.5%)	1 (0.9%)	111 (100%)	2
11. Cause students to learn only what will be tested	14 (12.7%)	33 (30%)	38 (34.5%)	19 (17.3%)	6 (5.5%)	110 (100%)	3
12. Exert a narrowing effect on curriculum	5 (4.5%)	30 (27%)	57 (51.4%)	17 (15.3%)	2 (1.8%)	111 (100%)	2
13. Punish the weaker students	8 (7.3%)	31 (28.2%)	52 (47.3%)	16 (14.5%)	3 (2.7%)	110 (100%)	3
14. Lead to superficial learning	2 (1.8%)	20 (18%)	68 (61.3%)	17 (15.3%)	4 (3.6%)	111 (100%)	2
15. Lead to passive learning	9 (8.2%)	34 (30.9%)	42 (38.2%)	18 (16.4%)	7 (6.4%)	110 (100%)	3
Total (% of the grand total)	103 (6.2%)	458 (27.6%)	692 (41.2%)	325 (19.6%)	89 (5.4%)	1657 (100%)	

is bi-modal in categories 2 and 3, indicating that tests and exams, for the respondents, could be a disadvantage. This is confirmed by the high voting for all items in category 2 ('quite a disadvantage'), ranging from the lowest of 18% for item 14 ('lead to superficial learning') to the highest of 39.6% for item 2 ('only test book knowledge'), i.e. respondents attached importance to all these disadvantages of tests and examinations.

The voting in category 2 for item 8 ('students/teachers do not know about other forms of assessment') received the lowest score (3.6%). Survey respondents attached limited importance to this disadvantage. The sum of all the items in this category 2 is 27.6% of the total voting, which is a moderately high score. The total scores for all the items in category 3 ('a little disadvantage') (41.2%) show that the respondents attached great importance to these. If the totals for categories 1 ('a very great disadvantage'), 2 ('quite a disadvantage') and 3 ('a little disadvantage') are added together, the sum is 75% of the total voting, a high percentage of the total voting. If categories 2 and 3 are totalled for each item, the sums are skewed towards the 70% range, with 86.5% in item 1 ('tests/exams are inflexible'). Items 5 ('cause students to study only in order to pass'), 6 ('make students forget after tests/exams'), 7 ('make students uninvolved in self-assessment'), 11 ('cause students to learn only what will be tested') and 15 ('lead to passive learning') score from 61.2% to 69.1%. These scores are high, indicating the importance of all of these items.

If one combines categories 1 and 2, five important features stand out: (a) the very low score for item 8 (3.6%) ('students/teachers do not know about other forms of

assessment'); (b) the low score on item 14 ('leads to superficial learning') (19.8%); (c) the low score on item 4 ('put undue pressure on teachers') (27.9%); (d) the low score on item 4 ('puts undue pressure on students') (31.8%); and (e) the low score on item 12 ('exert a narrowing effect on the curriculum') (32.2%). What, in other societies, teachers might regard as major problems, in Macau are not seen to be really as disadvantageous.

All items in category 5 ('no disadvantage') had very low voting, except item 8 ('students/teachers do not know about other forms of assessment'), which was an exceptional score of 25.2%. This confirms that, for the respondents, this issue does not seem to be a disadvantage. Indeed, if categories 4 and 5 are combined for item 8, the high total (72%) indicates that this area of teachers' and students' lack of knowledge did not seem to trouble the respondents, which is reinforced by the fact that item 8 contained the only empty cell in the whole matrix (in the category 'a very great disadvantage'); indeed categories 1 and 2 for this item only amounted to 3.6%.

The voting for the items in category 4 ('very little disadvantage') is high, from 14.5% for item 13 ('punish the weak students') to 46.8% for item 8 ('students/teachers do not know about other forms of assessment'), the modal score, indicating the importance given to the choice of this category. The sum of the items in category 4 is 19.6% of the total voting, confirming the importance given to these items. All the items in category 1 ('a very great disadvantage') had a very low voting; the total is only 6.2% of total voting, indicating the limited importance attached to this category by the respondents, i.e. they generally did not perceive there to be very great disadvantages for all the items listed.

Overall, the scores are skewed towards category 2 ('quite a disadvantage'), 3 ('a little disadvantage') and 4 ('very little disadvantage'), indicating that the use of tests and exams, according to the respondents, is not necessarily bad.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 9 cases out of a possible maximum of 165 (11 x 16 items on Section I4), i.e. 5.5% of cases, where distributions were statistically significant (using the Kruskal-Wallis test) the results show, with regard to tests and examinations, that:

- (a) Teachers with a degree felt the issue of 'lead to superficial learning' to be a much greater disadvantage than those without a degree;
- (b) Teachers in English medium schools felt the issues of putting undue pressure on students and teachers to be more of a problem than those in Chinese medium schools;
- (c) Teachers in private religious schools felt the issues of 'cause students to study only in order to pass' and 'students resent examinations' to be much more of a disadvantage than those teaching in government and private non-religious schools.

A correlation matrix was constructed, where all the variables in Section I2 were correlated with variables from Sections F2, F6, and G1, using Spearman's *rho*. The results show that: (a) there are too many tests and examinations, and these are associated with demotivated students; (b) tests and examinations dominate and narrow the

curriculum and are associated with over-full curricula, didactic, textbook-driven methods, drill, rote learning and memorization, and spoon-feeding.

The overall messages that emerge from this section are:

- Tests and examinations dominate the kinds and amounts of assessments;
- Tests and examinations dominate the curriculum, making it become rigid and narrow;
- There was a marked neglect, absence and lack of awareness of, forms and amounts of assessments other than testing and examinations;
- Tests and examinations were demotivating and did not guarantee long-term learning;
- Many teachers did not necessarily resent the amount and kind of testing, indeed most saw tests and examinations as advantageous rather than as disadvantageous;
- Disadvantages of testing and exams were recognized but given limited importance;
- Teachers did not feel their lack of knowledge of other forms of assessment to be particularly problematic;
- Teachers and students relied on tests and examinations to ensure learning, particularly of book knowledge;
- The need to pass exams and tests drives student's learning and teachers' teaching;
- Tests and examinations lead to didactic, textbook-driven methods, drill, rote learning and memorization, superficial learning, student passivity and spoon-feeding;
- Teachers with higher qualifications, particularly in English, saw the problems of over-testing as being much greater than those with lower qualifications.

There is clear evidence here of a dependency culture emerging: teachers and students both rely on testing to drive curricula and learning.

5.2.2.9 *Language-related factors*

Research question: What is the significance of language-related factors which affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

(a) *The medium of instruction*

The Primary 1 interview respondents remarked that they used up to 80% and sometimes 100% Chinese in class to give instructions and explanations, to make it easier for students to understand them. Some English was used (about 20%) to ask students questions and give them the opportunity to answer in a little English. The Primary 6 respondents used 50% Chinese and 50% English to make teaching understandable, whilst the Secondary 3 and 5 teachers used up to 80% of English to teach. However, they tended to use more Chinese when they taught grammar (about 60% of Chinese), i.e. they used a lot of translation when teaching grammar.

All the interview respondents said that, for question 30: *the strengths and weaknesses of using Chinese in English lessons*: (a) students benefited if English was used in class, but they were scared to use English to ask questions, and this hindered their understanding and learning; (b) if Chinese was mainly used in class, students were deprived of the

chance of listening to English; (c) if teachers used some English and then switched back to Chinese, students became very dependent on the translation and they would stop listening to English.

(b) The purposes of learning English in Macau

All the interview respondents commented that English was taught at school as it was an international language, so it was necessary to learn it. Further, a knowledge of English made it easier for students to further their studies and find a job, i.e. the perceived purposes of English teaching and learning at school were basically instrumental.

Table 5.50 presents the survey rating scale data for the purposes of English teaching in Macau.

Table 5.50: Rating scale data summarized for purposes of English teaching in Macau

	1 very little important	2 a little important	3 quite important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Miss- ing
1. To learn an international language	5 (4.6%)	9 (8.3%)	29 (26.9%)	45 (41.7%)	20 (18.5%)	108 (100%)	5
2. To gain employment		10 (9.3%)	41 (38.3%)	44 (41.1%)	12 (11.2%)	107 (100%)	6
3. To enable students to study abroad	2 (1.9%)	6 (5.6%)	29 (27.1%)	52 (48.6%)	18 (16.8%)	107 (100%)	6
Total (% of grand total)	7 (2.2%)	25 (7.8%)	99 (30.7%)	141 (43.8%)	50 (15.5%)	322 (100%)	

The modal score for all three items is category 4 ('very important') and accounts for 43.8% of the total voting ($[(41.7+41.1+48.6)] \div 300] \times 100$). Item 2 has a bi-modal score in the categories 'quite important' and 'very important', i.e. English is important 'to

gain employment'. Category 1 ('very little important') records the lowest overall score in all cases, 2.2% of the total voting ($[4.6+1.9 \div 300] \times 100$). The overall total for categories 1 and 2 is only 10% (2.2+7.8) of the complete 100%, indicating that, generally, the survey respondents attached importance to each of the items.

The importance of English is confirmed when scores for categories 3, 4 and 5 ('quite important', 'very important' 'extremely important') are totalled (30.7+43.8+15.5), as they account for 90% of the total scores. Category 5 ('extremely important') received a high score of 15.5% of the total. Item 3 ('to enable students to study abroad') received the highest score of categories 3, 4, and 5 (92.5%) (27.1+48.6+16.8), indicating the greatest importance, then 'to gain employment' (90.6% (38.3+41.1+11.2) of the total for that item), and finally 'to learn an international language' (87.1%) (26.9+41.7+18.5). The absence of any score in category 1 of 'to gain employment' is significant. Generally the scores for each item were skewed towards categories 3, 4 and 5.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were six cases out of a possible maximum of 33 (11 x 3 items on Section C), i.e. 18.2% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (all six using the Kruskal-Wallis test); the results show that:

- (a) the younger the teachers, the greater the importance they gave to the issue of 'to learn an international language';

- (b) the English medium schools regarded the need to learn English in order to gain employment generally as more important than the Chinese medium schools;
- (c) teachers in government and private religious schools regarded the need to learn English in order to gain employment generally as more important than the teachers in private non-religious schools, and teachers in private religious schools regarded the need to learn English in order to further students' studies abroad generally as more important than the teachers in government and private non-religious schools.

The overall messages from this section are that learning English is seen as particularly important as an international language and to enable students to further their studies abroad; this result is largely independent of the nominal characteristics of the sample.

5.2.2.10 *Ways of improving English teaching and learning in Macau*

Research question: What are some ways of improving English teaching and learning in Macau?

The interview data (question 31: *how to improve English teaching and learning*) are presented in table 5.51. One can observe the degree of unanimity in the responses given.

Table 5.51: Ways of improving English teaching and learning

Q31: How to improve English teaching and learning	
1. P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers needed to help students to build up a good and solid foundation when they were young so that students would have less problems learning English when they went up to higher forms.
2. P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers should be provided with more teaching resources and materials to make teaching more effective.
3. P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching should place more emphasis on quality then quantity. The syllabus needed to be adjusted so that teachers could really teach in depth and make sure that students had grasped the knowledge before they were taught something new. Aside from teaching, teachers should first understand and help students to cope with their emotions and feelings, as a better understanding of students helped to make teaching easier and more effective. Parents should try to give more support to their children as they were still too young to learn by themselves, especially learning a foreign language.
4. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers must use more interesting and effective teaching methods. Students should be taught in Chinese in the lower forms so that they had the opportunity to build up a better foundation. Students could be taught by English-speaking teachers when they went up to higher forms. Students then had more chance to come into contact with native English and native speakers. They would not fear listening to or using English with westerners when the opportunity arose.
5. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized activities for students to practice the language.
6. P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class size needed to be reduced for more effective teaching.
7. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More effective teaching would be possible if principals supported what teachers wanted to do about improving English teaching. The syllabus needs adjusting to provide quality and not quantity teaching.
8. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-media teaching should be adopted to make teaching effective.
9. F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government should be involved in monitoring the quality of English teaching and providing resources and support. In order to encourage active learning and arouse interest, teachers had to utilize active and diverse teaching methods. It might be helpful to ask students to monitor their own learning. Macau needed more EFL professionals to support English teaching.
10-12: F5	

Table 5.52 indicates the importance the survey respondents gave to the various factors that might lead to improvement in English learning and teaching in Macau.

Table 5.52: Factors for improvement in English teaching and learning in Macau

Factors for improvement	1 not at all important	2 very little important	3 a little bit important	4 very important	5 extremely important	Total	Miss- ing
1. Teachers should build up a firm foundation for further study		10 (9.1%)	33 (30%)	50 (45.5%)	17 (15.5%)	110 (100%)	3
2. Teachers should have access to more resources, including multimedia		5 (4.5%)	39 (35.5%)	52 (47.3%)	14 (12.7%)	110 (100%)	3
3. Emphasis should be on understanding and not on the amount learnt		5 (4.5%)	28 (25.5%)	57 (51.8%)	20 (18.2%)	110 (100%)	3
4. Teachers should try to understand students' learning difficulties and needs more		5 (4.5%)	26 (23.6%)	52 (47.3%)	27 (24.5%)	110 (100%)	3
5. Teachers should use more active/motivating methods		3 (2.8%)	33 (30.3%)	46 (42.2%)	27 (24.8%)	109 (100%)	4
6. Chinese should only be used in younger classes	2 (1.8%)	19 (17.4%)	56 (51.4%)	25 (22.9%)	7 (6.4%)	109 (100%)	4
7. Students should have more chances of practicing English		5 (4.6%)	28 (25.7%)	50 (45.9%)	26 (23.9%)	109 (100%)	4
8. School principals should give more support for English	1 (0.9%)	9 (8.3%)	39 (35.8%)	44 (40.4%)	16 (14.7%)	109 (100%)	4
9. Students' self-assessments should be increased		10 (9.2%)	48 (44%)	40 (36.7%)	11 (10.1%)	109 (100%)	4
10. Parents should support their children more in learning English	1 (0.9%)	11 (10.1%)	32 (29.4%)	44 (40.4%)	21 (19.3%)	109 (100%)	4
11. Employ more native-English speakers	3 (2.8%)	16 (14.7%)	50 (45.9%)	29 (26.6%)	11 (10.1%)	109 (100%)	4
12. Reduce class size	1 (0.9%)	10 (9.2%)	23 (21.1%)	40 (36.7%)	35 (32.1%)	109 (100%)	4
13. Government should provide more resources for English		2 (1.8%)	31 (28.4%)	44 (40.4%)	32 (29.4%)	109 (100%)	4
14. Government should monitor teaching and achievement in Macau	1 (0.9%)	12 (11%)	47 (43.1%)	33 (30.3%)	16 (14.7%)	109 (100%)	4
15. More EFL experts are needed to support English learning and teaching		6 (5.6%)	47 (43.9%)	37 (34.6%)	17 (15.9%)	107 (100%)	6
16. Employ native speakers for conversation	2 (1.8%)	12 (10/9%)	43 (39.1%)	36 (32.7%)	17 (15.5%)	110 (100%)	3
17. Employ native-speakers for older/more advanced classes	1 (0.9%)	10 (9.1%)	43 (39.1%)	39 (35.5%)	17 (15.5%)	110 (100%)	3
Total (% of grand total)	12 (0.6%)	150 (8.1%)	646 (34.8%)	718 (36.7%)	331 (17.8%)	1835 (100%)	

The modal score for 10 out of the 17 items is category 4 ('very important'), i.e. 25.8% of the total voting ($[(45.5+47.3+51.8+47.3+42.2+45.9+40.4+36.7+40.4) \div 1,700] \times 100$); the modal score for the other 7 items is category 3 ('a little bit important'), i.e. 18% of the total voting ($[(51.4+44+45.9+43.1+43.9+39.1+39.1) \div 1,700] \times 100$). The voting for almost all the items in category 5 ('extremely important') was generally very high, ranging from the lowest of 12.7% for item 2 ('teachers should have access to more resources, including multi-media') to the highest of 32.1% for item 12 ('reduce class size'), indicating that the survey respondents attached considerable importance to all the items in this category. Items 6 ('Chinese should only be used in younger classes') and 11 ('employ more native-English speakers') receives the lowest scores of 6.4% and 10.1% respectively, indicating the limited importance attached to these two categories.

If categories 4 ('very important') and 5 ('extremely important') are totalled for each item then item 3 ('emphasis should be on understanding and not on the amount learnt') receives a score of 70%, item 4 ('teachers should try to understand students' learning difficulties and needs more') receives 71.8%, item 12 ('reduce class size') receives 68.8%, item 13 ('government should provide more resources') receives 69.8%, and item 7 ('students should have more chances of practicing English') receives 69.8% – all high scores, indicating that these items have very strong importance. Overall, categories 4 and 5 account for 54.5% of the total voting. When the percentages for categories 3, 4 and 5 are summed, the total amounts to 89.3% of the total voting. The sum of the percentages for categories 3 ('a little bit important'), 4 ('very important') and 5 ('extremely important') for items 6, 10-11, 14 and 16, ranges from 80.7% (item 6, 'Chinese should

only be used in younger classes') to 97.2% for item 5 ('teachers should use more active/motivating methods'), clearly indicating the importance that these factors have in order to improve English teaching and learning effectiveness in Macau.

The voting for all the items in category 1 ('not at all important') was low (only 0.6% of the total voting). Similarly, in category 2 ('very little important'), the voting is only 8.1% of the total. Together, both categories only amount to 8.7% of the total voting. The scores overall are skewed towards the upper categories 3, 4 and 5, indicating the importance given to all these 17 factors for the improvement of the teaching and learning effectiveness of English in Macau.

When tests were run to determine whether any of the distributions varied statistically significantly according to the nominal characteristics of the sample (Section A, 1-11), there were 24 cases out of a possible maximum of 187 (11 x 17 items in section M) i.e. 12.8% of cases, where the distributions were statistically significant (using the Mann-Whitney or Kruskal-Wallis tests); results show that (space forbidding more than a summary):

- (a) Teachers trained to teach English thought items 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 14, and 16 to be more important than those who had not been trained to teach English, and thought items 13 ('government should provide more resources for English') to be less important than those who had not been trained to teach English;

- (b) Teachers with a degree thought items 3, 5, 7, 12, 16 to be more important than those who did not possess a degree, and those with a degree in English thought items 2, 3, 4, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17 to be more important than those who did not possess a degree;
- (c) Teachers in private non-religious schools considered items 1, 3, 4, 8 to be less important than did teachers from government and private religious schools.

The overall messages from this section are that respondents considered that:

- All of the 17 factors were very important;
- Reducing class size was seen as an extremely important factor;
- Employing native speakers was of lesser importance than several other factors listed;
- Particular importance was attached to: (a) emphasizing understanding students' learning difficulties and needs; (b) emphasizing understanding rather than the amount learnt; (c) the use of more active and motivating methods; (d) the provision of more opportunities for students to use English; (e) the provision of more resources by government; and (f) the confinement of Chinese to younger classes.

5.3 Summary of the interview data

What characterizes the interview data is the widespread agreement of the respondents on the issues. For example:

1. There was absolute unanimity in the responses to questions 5, 7-10, 12-15, 20, 22-5, 28-30, i.e. for some 55% of responses;
2. There was very considerable, though not absolute, unanimity on questions 4, 11, 16-19, and 21, i.e. for some 23% of responses;
3. There was unanimity amongst the primary teachers in respect of questions 4, 11, 21 and 27, i.e. for some 13% of responses and considerable (though not absolute) unanimity amongst the primary teachers in respect of questions 6, 18-19, and 26, i.e. for some 13% of responses;
4. There was absolute unanimity amongst the secondary teachers in respect of questions 17, 18, and 19, i.e. some 10% of responses, and considerable, though not absolute unanimity amongst the secondary teachers in respect of questions 4, 16, 21, and 26, i.e. some 13% of responses.

These percentages are rounded; 78% of responses indicated absolute or high degrees of unanimity, regardless of the age groups taught by the teachers. Such a degree of unanimity gives considerable power to the results, particularly because the sample of experienced teachers was deliberately selected to provide an informed overview of the key issues to be faced in Macau. Though the degree of unanimity is useful, the primary purpose of the interview data was to identify key issues, regardless of unanimity, convergence or frequency of their mention. That the respondents articulated similar issues, however, signals that these are important elements.

Further, the issues themselves lie in a diversity of fields, such that there is no single or simplistic set of problems or solutions. To complement the considerable unanimity of response is the considerable unanimity in identifying the scope of the problems, whose range is substantial. Both singly and together, the issues of English language teaching, learning and achievement in Macau are complex. The messages are clear: in respect of F5 students and their English teaching and learning, respondents said that:

- (i) there is very marked student underachievement; at worst, only 20 per cent are up to standard, and, at best, only 70 per cent are up to standard;
- (ii) English performance is weak in all aspects – reading, writing, speaking, and listening, being particularly weak in speaking and writing;
- (iii) local cultural factors exert an influence on English, in that: (a) students do not wish to lose face in public (and the Chinese emphasis on gaining and maintaining face is powerful); (b) students are shy and afraid of making mistakes; (c) the pressure of examination success is universal and substantial; (d) the local culture is not English; it is Chinese and, next, is Portuguese rather than English, though this latter is very limited; there is little need for people to speak or use English in Macau at present;
- (iv) English is seen instrumentally, but this message has to be qualified, as many students gain employment and University entrance even though their English is weak. The fact of English being an international language has limited effect on student motivation or achievement;

(v) poor teaching and learning are significant contributors to poor performance, in several areas:

- The emphasis on drill, rote learning and memorization;
- The emphasis on superficial learning rather than extended/deep understanding;
- The predominance of passive rather than active learning, with teaching as the delivery of facts rather than the promotion of learning and understanding;
- The overuse of traditional didactic methods;
- Teaching styles are boring and students are bored;
- The reliance on a very limited range of teaching and learning styles;
- The over-reliance on textbooks and exercises, which determine the teaching;
- The unimaginative use of textbooks, which are used in their entirety and with little modification;
- The lack of provision for speaking and activity-based learning;
- Teachers show limited concern for students' motivation;
- Teachers demonstrate limited understanding of, or willingness to understand, their students in a rounded way;
- The limited subject and pedagogical knowledge of English teachers, compounded by the lack of adequate initial and post-initial teacher education;
- The careful laying of foundations of English teaching/learning is often absent;
- Students find English unnecessarily difficult;

- Students use so much Chinese during English lessons that they have little chance to think in English – they translate rather than think in English.

(vi) syllabus and curriculum organization factors exert a significant influence on effective teaching and learning in the following ways:

- School curricula are not standardized, hence quality control is limited;
- English curricula are usually designed by the English teachers, but the curricula are not often modified, even if they are shown to be unworkable;
- Syllabuses are too full and, therefore, too demanding, leading to an emphasis on superficial quantity rather than quality of understanding and on didactic, ‘spoon-feeding’ methods of teaching and learning;
- There are too many school subjects, leading to superficiality in the emphasis within English teaching;
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on English, and it has little relatedness to other curricular areas;
- There is a substantial over-reliance on textbooks and the exercises contained in them as the main sources of teaching and learning;
- Curricula are fixed, rigid, and this is linked to a rigid regime of testing;
- Teachers can exert significance decision-making on curricula, content, syllabuses or pedagogy; however, they do not do this;
- Timetabling places English at unsympathetic times of the day for learning, as there other subjects to be accommodated;
- Students only learn what they are taught; what they are taught is very restricted.

(vii) the practice of testing and examinations exerts a narrowing and negative effect on achievement in English, in the following ways:

- The backwash effect of University entrance examinations restricts the focus of English teaching to book learning and does not motivate students to learn English more widely;
- Students are largely only motivated by examination pressure, yet this pressure is only to achieve that which is tested in examinations, and is highly restricted;
- The backwash effect and pressure of examinations is very great on both teachers and students, bringing conformity to, and compliance with, inappropriate – superficial – curricula and English syllabuses;
- Teachers spend vast amounts of time on marking;
- There is very little or no alternative to the regime of examinations; authentic assessment, a wide scope of assessment, self-assessment, self-diagnosis, diagnostic assessment, participation in class are almost entirely absent;
- Learning for examinations replaces deep learning;
- Learning is largely only for the purpose of passing examinations;
- Students bleach material from their minds after the examination;
- Exams build in failure; the fear and experience of failure is strong in Macau;

(viii) there were several external factors which contributed to student and teacher problems in the learning and teaching of English:

- The size of classes (between 30 and 60 students) inhibits teaching styles to didacticism, low-level rote learning, and the opportunities to practice conversation; it also prevents teachers from having time to learn more about, and from their students;
- There are many non-native English teachers in Macau, leading to: poor models of English learning; a reluctance by students to use English; an overuse of Chinese in English lessons; recourse to textbook-driven models of teaching and learning; poor foundations being laid for subsequent learning;
- The opportunities to repeat courses and years in school lets some students be lazy and complacent;
- The extent of English usage in school is often limited to the English classes;
- There is little family support and principal support for English learning;
- There is a lack of resources to support English language teaching;
- There is a lack of English experts in Macau to develop English teachers.

(ix) student motivation was an important problematical area, in several ways:

- Students disliked the bookish nature of English learning;
- Students were distracted by other subjects and by their social lives outside school, all of the latter being in a non-English environment;
- There were few incentives to learning English;
- Students only do the minimum necessary to pass the examinations;
- Students are largely driven only by the need to gain marks in examinations;

- Many students are unmotivated to learn at school, regarding success at school as unrelated to success in life beyond or outside school.

From the interview data it can be seen that the size of the problems and issues to be faced in English language teaching and learning in Macau is vast.

5.4 Summary of the questionnaire data

The overall picture that emerges is depressing, if typical, perhaps, of countries where language learning does not have a high status. This, of course, is a societal as well as an educational issue. Whilst English is recognized as important, for a variety of reasons, nevertheless an overwhelming majority of teachers indicated that large numbers of students were very considerably below standard, only a small number were around standard, and only a tiny number were above standard. Overall the standard is marked by mediocrity, and excellence is absent. There is a range of problems of under-achievement in Form 5 students in English in Macau. Problems lie in all aspects of English, and are particularly serious in speaking, followed by listening and writing, with reading as the least of the problem areas. These problems may be attributed to several factors:

(a) The External Environment in Macau

- Students do not need to use English in Macau, for employment, for everyday life, for social life, or for university entrance;

- There is little family support for the learning and use of English;
- There is very limited use of, and exposure to, English outside classes;

(b) Teaching and Learning Methods

- Teaching and learning of English are widely seen as largely ineffective in Macau;
- Large classes are very widespread in Macau, and are a hugely important determinant of teaching and learning of English in Macau;
- There is substantial and widespread over-reliance on traditionalist, didactic methods, drill, rote learning and memorization in all aspects of the English curriculum, which, in turn obstruct understanding; these methods are poor;
- Didactic teaching is used for very much whole-class teaching; this method is poor;
- There is substantial and widespread over-reliance on textbook-driven teaching and learning in all aspects of the English curriculum, indeed many students regard English as ‘too bookish’; this reliance is an attribute of poor teaching;
- Much text-book driven work is exercise-based;
- There is substantial and widespread ‘spoon-feeding’ of students in all aspects of the English curriculum;
- There is over-emphasis on grammar-translation methods;
- There is considerable under-emphasis on the development of students’ abilities to think in English;
- Emphasis is placed heavily on teacher-centred rather than student-centred methods, and on receptive rather than productive skills;

- There is very little opportunity for student-centred learning, e.g. projects, student-chosen work, group work, non-textbook-related work, oral activities, practical work;
- There is very limited development of, or opportunity for, oral work in English classes;
- The opportunity to repeat classes exerts a negative effect on the need to be successful at English;
- Students only learn what they are taught;
- Too many teachers used Chinese too much in English lessons;
- Teaching- and learning-related factors were all seen as important contributors to the ineffectiveness of English learning in Macau;
- Many pedagogy-related factors were seen as important contributors to ineffective English in Form 5 students in Macau;
- Because class sizes are so large in Macau, teachers use the above teaching and learning styles as control strategies;

(c) *Student-related Factors*

- Many students are seen as lazy, unmotivated to learn English, and poor at managing their time;
- Students have to learn compliance and passivity, which obstruct their deep learning;
- The Chinese cultural factor of avoidance of loss of face contributes to poor performance and a certain shyness or reluctance to use English;

- Students' lack of engagement with English is a significant problem in their successful learning of English, and there is a negligible amount of student engagement in, involvement in, and autonomy with regard to, their learning;

(d) *Teacher-related Factors*

- Teachers were largely seen as unable to motivate their students to learn English other than by tests and examinations;
- Teachers did not have sufficient expertise, initial or in-service training to equip them to be effective teachers;
- Teachers with a degree (first or higher), particularly in English, were generally less accepting of, and more critical of, the situations with regard to teachers, students, curricula and testing (set out here) than were those teachers without a degree;
- Many teacher-related factors were seen as important contributors to ineffective learning;
- Having native speakers was important for English in Macau, though not as important as many other factors indicated in this summary;
- Non-native speakers had advantages over native speakers, e.g. in being able to explain clearly to students;

(e) *Curriculum-related Factors*

- Many curriculum-related factors were seen as important contributors to ineffective learning;
- Teachers are under pressure to cover overfull, narrow, rigid and facts-driven syllabuses and curricula, which are reinforced by frequent testing and examinations, resulting in the teaching methods set out above;
- The curriculum is superficial and neglects developing students' understanding;
- Much of the curriculum is geared to University entrance requirements;
- It is useful to include learning about English culture and to integrate this into the English curriculum;

(f) *Testing and Examinations*

- There is substantial and widespread over-reliance on over-frequent testing and examinations; these are hugely influential in driving the curriculum, learning and teaching, and teacher- and student-behaviour;
- Tests and examinations are used as prime motivators for students and teachers;
- Students only learn for the sake of passing tests, and teachers largely reinforce their teaching by over-frequent testing;
- Testing reduces long-term, deep learning in English;
- Teachers and students regard the over-reliance on testing and examinations as advantageous rather than as disadvantageous;

- Teachers are aware of some of the disadvantages of over-reliance on testing, but regard these as acceptable, given the other advantages of testing;
- Teachers are frequently unaware of, and do not use, a range of assessment methods or alternatives to testing, nor did they consider their lack of knowledge and practice of other forms to be much of a problem;
- There is a widespread dependency culture of testing and examinations;
- Testing and examinations, though frequently most important at the upper end of secondary school, were still seen as overwhelmingly important, regardless of the grades taught;

(g) Recommendations for improvement

Several key features emerged here :

- The need for reduction in class size was paramount;
- Placing greater emphasis on student understanding rather than rote memorization was seen as important;
- Adopting a more diagnostic approach, understanding students' difficulties and learning needs, were seen to be important;
- Teaching methods need to promote student involvement, engagement and autonomy, and to become much more active and student-centred;
- Raising student motivation is a major factor in effectiveness of learning of English;

- Didactic, traditionalist, drill and practice methods, with an overemphasis on memorization, rote and spoon-feeding should be drastically reduced;
- Far more opportunities should be provided for oral work and the development of thinking in English;
- Facts-based, narrow and rigid curricula should be reduced to enable understanding and more active learning to develop;
- Broader curricula should include learning about English culture;
- Textbook-driven teaching and learning should be reduced hugely;
- More resources by government were seen as important;
- More opportunities to use English should be provided;
- Support for innovations in English teaching should be given by principals;
- Newer forms of assessment and student self-assessment should be introduced;
- Testing and examination should be reduced;
- The link between teaching, learning and the current practices in testing and examinations needs to be broken;
- Curriculum developers need to listen to the views of experienced and more highly qualified teachers of English;
- More needs to be provided at all levels of training – pre-service and in-service;
- The use of Chinese in English lessons should be reduced;

(h) Emerging differences

Teachers with a degree were more concerned about the situation than those without. Where there were differences between schools (which was very rare overall), four points emerged: (a) teachers in Chinese-medium schools were generally more accepting of the teaching styles outlined above than those in English-medium schools, yet they also demonstrated concern for new developments; (b) private religious schools demonstrated the greatest worries about the existing situation in Macau; (c) those in government schools demonstrated significant concerns about the existing situation in Macau; (d) those private non-religious schools, whilst having many concerns about the existing situation in Macau, did so slightly less frequently than the private religious and government schools. However, it would be unwise to place too great an emphasis on these points, given the very few cases in which such differences were either observed or significant.

What is also important is that most of the data hold true, largely regardless of the nominal characteristics of the sample (though exceptions have been noted here); given that the sample was constructed carefully in order to ensure representativeness and generalizability, these data can be seen to identify widespread problems in Macau.

5.5 Combining the interview and questionnaire data

When one reviews the interview and questionnaire data, what is very striking is the level of agreement between them, in several ways:

the range and substance of the issues raised;
the importance accorded to the issues raised;
the identification of recurrent themes.

Given this marked degree of overlap it is unnecessary to repeat the main findings of the two data sets here.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter is in two main sections. Firstly it discusses the empirical data, presenting an interpretation of them and possible explanations for the findings (6.1). Secondly it returns to the purposes and research questions of the thesis and addresses these (6.2). However, a point needs to be made here. Given the focus and scope of the study, all that is possible for the interpretations and explanations provided in this chapter based on the empirical data is the formulation of ‘fuzzy generalizations’ (Bassey, 1999) rather than precise conclusions.

6.1 Discussion and interpretation of the empirical data

The empirical data were perception-based, and were marked by great similarity of perceptions across the sample, though some exceptions were noted in chapter five. Why might the results be as they are? Several possible reasons for this are presented by the respondents.

The situation presented is that, in Macau, several factors combine to render the teaching and learning of English problematical and ineffective. These can be divided into two groups, *firstly* factors which are not exclusive to English teaching, and *secondly*, factors which are more particular to English teaching. With regard to the former, the data here reinforce a widespread phenomenon in teaching and learning in Macau schools:

- Class sizes are large and exert a serious restraining force on the curriculum and pedagogy;
- The curriculum is heavily facts-driven, with an emphasis on the acquisition and repetition of superficial knowledge;
- Curricula are over-full, leading to ‘spoon-feeding’ of students;
- Pedagogy is largely didactic, with little variation in teaching styles;
- Teachers rely very heavily on textbooks, rote learning, exercises and memorization;
- A culture of compliance exists in which teachers enact a received curriculum and, in turn, exact compliance from students;
- Learning is passive and receptive;
- Tests and assessments are the main and often the sole stimulants and motivators for student learning and exert a significant effect on the contents of the curriculum;
- Teachers do not challenge current assessment and teaching practices;
- Failure is built in by the constant regime of testing and examinations;
- The curriculum is characterized by teacher-centred teaching rather than student-centred learning.

The problems found in English teaching are not exclusive to English teaching in these respects, but are part of a much more pervasive set of problems in Macau schools. These were noted in chapter one of the thesis, and apply from kindergarten school age upwards. Further discussion is provided below.

With regard to the second group of factors, there were several features more specific to English teaching in Macau that were found, for example:

- Students currently find English a difficult subject;
- Students currently do not require English for employment or daily life in Macau;
- Though English is a formal requirement for some University entrance, students can still enter University with poor English;
- University entrance exerts a significant backwash on English courses in school;
- Local cultural factors render students unwilling to practice English in front of their peers and teachers;
- Speaking English has a low profile in the English curriculum;
- Teachers' abilities, though respondents felt that they were sufficient for the task, are, in some cases, limited;
- Chinese is used too much in English lessons.

These factors, both widespread and also specific to English, reinforce each other, and are part of a self-protecting system, which is difficult to break. Simply changing one factor may have limited impact, as the other factors present in Macau exert a strong constraint to keep the situation as it currently is. For example, one has to ask why so many comparatively new, undergraduate and postgraduate teachers seem to have so little impact on change in Macau (discussed below). The situation of English teaching in Macau is the consequence of several other local circumstances which inhibit change. (*Note: some of the following discussion is informed by personal communications, noted*

where appropriate. Macau, as a developing country, does not have a strong, formal research-evidence basis for some of the issues presented below; this does not negate their significance or presence; it merely denotes that rigorous empirical research has not been done in these areas. Nor is this to relegate the discussion to low-level anecdote or voicing of prejudice, but, rather, reports widespread phenomena which are not formally documented. Further, there *is* some research evidence on the issues, but its owners have deliberately not placed this in the public domain, and therefore it cannot be referenced here; again, this is noted where it occurs below; this is the ethical issue of not risking harm to individuals, as these matters are sensitive in Macau):

- (i) the very high proportion of private providers of education in Macau (over 93% of the overall education system), coupled with a strong ‘market mentality’ of education (Tang and Morrison, 1998), places schools in competition with each other. Secondary schools must be seen to be gaining the most number of University places; they must be seen to have the greatest proportions of Form 5 and Form 6 graduation in comparison to their competitors. If schools’ results are poor in these respects then they lose enrolments. This exerts a significant constraint on change to the traditionalism found in many Macau schools, as it is traditionalism that has produced their putative success.
- (ii) Schools are regarded largely as academic preparation, servicing institutions; students who are not academically strong are either not accepted into, or are excluded or expelled from many schools (De Robertis, 2001) in an effort to keep

the profile of those schools strong in the eyes of parents. School exclusion and expulsion are significant problems in Macau, not least in the private Catholic schools (*ibid.*). Some private schools, for example, have the highest academic reputation in Macau yet they also either do not accept or do not retain students whose academic performance is poor (*ibid.*).

- (iii) Parental pressure on schools is considerable. In a market mentality schools whose self-declared results are low lose prestige and students. Indeed deliberate grade inflation/manipulation/adjustment is not unknown in some Macau secondary schools (*source*: personal communications with teachers and principals), and this is easy to operate because a public, standardized assessment and examination system does not operate in Macau. Schools simply declare that the students have graduated. Many parents pay considerable sums of money in the burgeoning industry of private lessons to buttress up the existing curricular, pedagogic and testing system, using private lessons to follow-up on poor teaching in the schools (Bray, 1999).
- (iv) Many teachers are under considerable pressure from parents, senior teachers, principals and colleagues *not* to change the system (*source*: personal communications with teachers, and non-public-domain research). In an environment in which most teachers are on yearly contracts, coupled with a widespread command-and-control mentality of senior managers and principals in Macau schools (and principals in this largely private education system control

contract renewal), disagreeing with a practice can lead to the non-renewal of contracts, so teachers remain silent and obedient (*source*: personal communication with teachers).

- (v) Macau's education system has been a largely *laissez-faire* matter (Tang and Morrison, 1998) marked by inertia. Since the handover of Macau from Portugal to China in 1999 the Education Department has attempted to make some interventions in its schools (just over 6% of the total of schools), but, in the face of such a large private sector, it is comparatively powerless to intervene. There are structural, systemic problems in Macau, such as class size, a finite education budget (for capital building costs etc.), and limited space for school building. Many schools in Macau are large (up to 8,000 students, with very many between 2,000 – 4,000 students), and their size militates against change. Further, if only one school changes its policies and practices to improve then it still leaves the other schools untouched; the only school to risk falling rolls will be the one that has changed.
- (vi) Macau is a developing state. The government-declared imperative is for modernization and development (www.al.gov.mo). Perhaps like other developing countries, Macau's situation has to deal with priorities in order. *First* is the provision of universal education, and Macau does not have universal free education in practice as so many parents rely on private school provision, for which they pay fees. Free education only exists if choice between private and

public education is realistic, and in Macau, if private, fee-paying schools did not exist, some 93% of the school population would not have access to education. *Second* is the provision of the necessary infrastructure of support and administration of education, and Macau does not have several important tiers of educational support infrastructures (Tang and Morrison, 1998), e.g. fully developed initial teacher education for all areas of schooling and in-service provision, local co-ordination, inspection, advisory, examination, and other services (e.g. psychological services and social services). *Third* is the provision of adequate expertise in its teachers, in terms of subject knowledge, school curricula, pedagogy, assessment, psychology of learning etc., and Macau still employs secondary teachers with no formal teacher training and, until 1990, primary teachers with no formal teaching qualification (Governo de Macau, 1990; Tang and Morrison, 1998), i.e. there are still many primary teachers in Macau with no formal training. Only 52.5% of teachers in Macau have received initial teacher training (Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2000). *Fourthly* is the provision of a locally relevant curriculum, and Macau still relies on curricula and resources from outside Macau which are not relevant to Macau (Tang and Morrison, 1998). *Fifth* Macau's education system is largely regarded as a service industry for employment and higher education, i.e. to serve an economically modernizing agenda for Macau (www.al.gov.mo). Learning English, if it is not to be instrumentally useful (and in many cases in Macau it is not) will not be regarded as important (the results of the empirical research in this thesis make this very clear).

- (vii) Teacher education in Macau is of mixed quality. At the time of writing, many secondary schools still employ untrained teachers, most, though not all of whom, hold a subject degree. Steps have been taken to address this situation by the Education Department in Macau in terms of seeking to require all teachers to have received initial teacher education (Governo de Macau, 1990; Direcção Serviços de Estatística e Censos, 2000), but the sole public provider of secondary teacher education in Macau (the University of Macau) currently does not run initial teacher education courses for all school subjects (see chapter two), so any requirement for total initial teacher education is unenforceable. Coupled with a localization policy for the workforce and low salaries for most teachers in private schools (*source*: personal communications with school principals and teachers), the effects of which are to prevent high quality expatriate teachers from coming to Macau schools and therefore to recruit into Macau's schools teachers who, themselves, have come up through the existing Macau system as students and so may not have been exposed to alternative ways of thinking about education, and it is not difficult to see that reproduction of the problem is almost unavoidable.
- (viii) The Confucian ethic of respect for one's seniors, and acceptance of, and compliance with their decisions is deep-seated in Macau (Lee, 1996; Biggs, 1996a; 1996b). The consequences of this are that seniors' views are either to be accepted by teachers or teachers should leave the school, i.e. by self-selection or termination of contract.

- (ix) The Confucian ethic of respect for seniority and compliance couples with respect for family's wishes (Lee, 1996), such that students not only have little right to question teachers, but, if they fail to do well in school, this is a matter of family disgrace, so there is considerable pressure to achieve (*ibid.*). Learned helplessness (Weiner, 1992: 265-70; Galloway *et al*, 1998: 33-4) is strong, as spoon-feeding is the order of the day for teaching in many subjects in the curriculum.

- (x) Entrance requirements for the local universities in Macau are low. For example, students in Macau might pass the University entrance examination but fail their own school graduation (*source*: personal communication with school principals). If students can enter the local University so easily then the pressure for high academic achievement is reduced. Many Macau schools advise their highest performing students not to apply to the local Universities but to seek a place in a 'better' University outside Macau (Bray *et al*, 2001: ix).

- (xi) Schools in Macau are still very largely dominated by very limited public accountability and they still largely dictate to parents the schools' aims, curricula, methodology, assessment, management, decision-making and activities. Parents are actively discouraged from coming into school; if they complain or question then a frequent school response is an invitation to take their child to another school (*source*: personal communications with parents and principals). Parents' voices and views are not listened to, not heard, or not raised (*ibid*). In the Macau

situation, schools can choose students rather than *vice versa*, a particularly powerful feature in the 'élite' private (Catholic) secondary schools

The effect of these macro-level factors (some of which, for example items (v) and (vi), might be common to developing countries) is to reinforce a system of education which is challengeable but largely unchallenged in Macau. There are very many pressures on teachers in Macau *not* to question the system (*source*: personal communications with teachers). If one couples this with the Chinese characteristic of respect for seniority and the rights of seniors to direct the juniors, it is not difficult to provide an explanation for the inertia and practices that were found in the data. The issue here, then, is that the homogeneity of the results/perceptions is due, in some part, to the commonality of the circumstances and situations that the teachers were facing.

Within schools, a widely known phenomenon is of a compliant culture for teachers and students (*source*: personal communications with teachers, the empirical data in this thesis, and non-public-domain research). Not only are many secondary schools hierarchical, but non-senior members of staff are neither expected to take policy decisions nor to challenge them (*source*: non-public-domain research). Many school principals operate a command-and-control mentality, however benevolent (*sources*: personal communications with teachers, and non-public-domain research). Hence, though the problems of curricula, pedagogy and assessment to which teachers alluded were largely self-inflicted by the schools themselves (as, apart from the 6.3% of government schools, the schools have very substantial autonomy over their own

activities), there appears to be a lack of will amongst many senior staff for changes (and senior managers are the decision-makers), be this because of parental pressure, the significance of keeping face in public and in private within schools (and the Chinese culture of face-gaining, face-giving, face-saving, face-losing and face-keeping is very powerful in Macau), the press for University entrance success, or for other reasons (*source*: personal communications with teachers and principals). That said, there is some indication of change in Macau, for example at the time of writing the management, curricula and pedagogy of one English-medium secondary school in Macau are changing radically with the appointment of a new principal (though it took the appointment of a new principal to initiate the change).

The culture of not losing face, coupled with a strong culture of compliance, impact on students learning English (as evidenced in the empirical data in this thesis). For example, they are shy and lacking in confidence in speaking in front of their teachers and peers, and they are not used to 'having a voice' in a culture which tells them that their role is to listen, receive, and be passive and obedient.

Another possible explanation for the data lies with the teachers themselves, rather than with the broader system-level factors; it is that the teachers: (i) were either unaware of alternatives to the practices that they experienced and about which they were asked to comment; (ii) did not wish to challenge the situation which gave rise to their own, perhaps pessimistic perceptions; or (iii) felt unable to alter the circumstances that gave rise to them. In the case of all of these issues, perhaps, is of saturation with a given

mentality; the homogeneity of the respondents' perceptions is due then, not only to the similarity of the situations that they were facing but also to the shared value system which was in operation. Whether the source of the shared value system is the macro-level situation or the teachers themselves is an open question, and not for this study.

A further, related, possible explanation for the findings is the sampling strategy that was used. Though the sample was of English teachers in Macau, these are only one sector of the education population. One could speculate whether different, perhaps less pessimistic or less homogeneous, results would have been obtained if the sampling had included, for example, representatives of the Education Department in Macau, school principals, students, parents, employers, and teachers of other subjects. The suggestion here is that teachers of other subjects, and principals in Macau could well have concurred in their perceptions with those found here, as the same common macro-problems exist for them all. Whether they would hold the same *feelings* and *values* towards those perceptions or situations is an open question, and not for this study.

Whichever explanation one wishes to adopt for the findings, the issue remains that the problems which were found in English teaching and learning in Macau are, in large part, not exclusive to the English curriculum, but are part of a larger school-wide phenomenon which, as has been suggested, here, is embedded in a powerful cultural context in Macau which renders it difficult to break. English teaching and learning, here, is a particularly sharp example of the problems that are more widespread in Macau's education. This is reinforced by the factors which are specific to English and which are not necessarily to be

found in other subjects, e.g. the perceived lack of real need to learn the subject, an environment which does not use the subject, limited applicability to other subjects and learning in school, over-reliance on particular teaching methods (e.g. grammar/translation) and neglect of other teaching methods (e.g. communicative competence and speaking).

What is being suggested, then, is that the findings can be explained in terms of the macro-level factors in Macau, the circumstances in schools, the values present in the teachers, the sampling strategy used in the study, and the particular situation of English and English teaching in Macau. The data were perception-based; the discussion so far has suggested that these perceptions are not the shared misunderstandings of teachers but actually represent the real situation. Further, it suggests that, if the situation is to change, then changing teachers' perceptions is an important area for attention. Teachers' perceptions will only change when their real circumstances change.

6.2 Addressing the research purposes and questions

The thesis seeks to compare the effectiveness of English teaching and learning in Macau with the ideal type of English language teaching and learning recommended by the literature. The purpose of this comparison is to ascertain the impact of various factors on English learning effectiveness in Macau, so that improvements can be made. To address these purposes the literature search found seven factors which contribute to the effectiveness of English learning and achievement:

1. The choice of a curriculum model which takes into consideration students' language needs, learning motives, learners' factors and learning strategies before and during the teaching and learning processes;
2. the effectiveness of teaching methodology and assessment on motivating students and improving language learning;
3. the incorporation of a target language culture into learning so that L2 learning becomes more context-based and thus induces greater learning motivation;
4. the proper choice and use of ELT textbooks to make L2 learning more interesting and motivating;
5. efficient and proficient L2 teachers, either non-native or native English speaking, with appropriate L2 training;
6. the provision of both efficient pre- and in-service teacher training for L2 teachers to upgrade them on both language efficiency and teaching efficiency;
7. the moderate use of the mother tongue to improve English learning.

The answers to the research questions, with interpretation, discussion and explanation of the relevant findings, are presented below. The discussion does not rehearse the detailed findings reported in chapter five.

(a) What is the level of achievement of Form Five students in Macau?

Teachers' perceptions were of significant Form Five student under-achievement in all elements of the English curriculum (Tables 5.15 – 5.17), with particular problems in

speaking, then in listening and writing. This is perhaps unsurprising. Maybe because of pressure to complete a textbook-driven syllabus, coupled with frequent tests and examinations of text-book knowledge and teacher-given facts, together with University entrance examinations in English which stress grammar and reading, students' abilities and opportunities to express themselves were limited (c.f. Table 5.24). Further, given the problem of class size and the noise generated by conversations, the opportunities for students to talk in English are very limited; indeed some school principals actively discourage this – a noisy classroom is a sign of indiscipline, so students are placed in the impossible situation of having to learn to speak English without speaking English.

(b) What curriculum-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?

In terms of the match between ideal and actual models of effective curricula, the situation in Macau suggests that there is a considerable discrepancy here. There are substantial problems with the English curriculum in Macau, as it was found to be (c.f. Table 5.21):

- (a) too fixed, rigid, narrow and overfull;
- (b) unbalanced in its concentration on grammar, rote memorization and the recall of superficial knowledge to the detriment of speaking, listening and communicative competence;
- (c) lacking in developing students' understanding;
- (d) giving too little room to the exercise of student autonomy;

- (e) over-reliant on textbook-driven teaching;
- (f) too examination oriented (within-school and University entrance examinations);
- (g) causing undue pressure on students and teachers.

The curriculum in Macau schools is objectives-driven, and this translates itself into performance objectives for students, syllabus-driven teaching, and an over-reliance on textbooks, underpinned by extensive use of tests and examinations. The disadvantages of specifying a curriculum have been outlined by Krashen and Terrell (1983), Littlejohn (1985) and el Nil el Fadil (1985) – it restricts and overlooks learners' needs, interests and involvement (Richards, 1990; Seedhouse, 1995); it is too rigid, behaviorist and expects to achieve too much within limited time. This is detrimental to effective learning (Naiman, *et al.*, 1978).

The English syllabus in Macau differs from school to school, as schools have autonomy over their own school system, syllabus design and choice of textbooks (confirmed by the data). The data revealed that the English syllabus in Macau is driven by University entrance examinations, with learning focused mainly on grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension, resulting in a neglect of developing students' communicative competence. Further, the over-full and rigid syllabus is self-inflicted. The data clearly indicate that the teachers are well aware of the situation, but do little to alter it. They used whole-class, didactic teaching in order to cover as much as possible within limited time.

The curriculum itself in Macau is in the hands of the teachers, with little consideration of the needs and interests of students, and the motivation for learning English is simply passing tests and exams, the fallout from which, and the support for which, can be seen in the thriving private lessons (Bray, 1999), which are used to re-teach and re-learn material supposedly covered in school.

In terms of rigidity of textbook use, which the data found (Tables 5.22 and 5.23), Hutchinson and Torres (1994) comment that textbooks provide a framework guide for normal day-to-day classroom teaching and learning, and teachers can then concentrate on planning their teaching in order to make it more creative, interesting and effective. Textbooks are also the means for classroom interactions and give a clear direction for both teachers and students (Allwright, 1981; Torres, 1990; Allwright and Bailey, 1995), as they know what is being expected from teaching and learning.

The problem is that over-reliance on textbooks turns teaching into something rigid and inflexible, and may reinforce the employment of a certain kind of teaching method (Sercu, 1998). Such a situation exists in Macau. One needs to remember that no textbook can fit perfectly into any teaching/learning situation nor the needs of learners (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994), so teachers have to use more informed and discerning information and their own judgement and experience to evaluate the suitability of any textbook (Sheldon, 1988; Kast and Neuner, 1994). Textbooks must be used flexibly so that their greatest benefits can be utilized and achieved.

The data indicate that English teachers in Macau have many choices of English textbooks. Teachers rely heavily on certain chosen texts and the grammar exercises that come with them. When class time is running short, the teachers will then focus only on the more important aspects of what they should teach. Still they follow the book and its exercises. The idea of making adjustments in order to put more emphasis on quality instead of quantity is not strong in the teachers' minds. The most important thing for them is to follow the pre-set syllabus as much as possible. The need to finish the textbook controls much teaching and learning, and teachers simply want to finish and teach as much as they can within the limited class time. This lack of flexibility and modification is self-inflicted, as individual schools are the ones to set the syllabus and to choose the textbooks. For teaching, learning and achievements to improve, the heavy reliance on textbooks needs to be altered.

(c) What teacher-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?

In terms of the match between the ideal situation reported in the literature and the actual situation reported in Macau, the discrepancy is considerable. In terms of teacher training, there was some degree of complacency observed in the data, for the modal score of respondents (Tables 5.26 – 5.27) indicated that they considered themselves to be adequately trained, though there was inadequate in-service education. Particular problems lay in several teacher-related areas (Table 5.32), for example teachers:

- (a) were poor at motivating students;
- (b) used a limited range of teaching styles, particularly drill, rote, whole-class and didactic teaching;
- (c) placed little emphasis on students' understanding;
- (d) over-emphasized grammar-translation and receptive rather than productive skills;
- (e) relied too heavily on textbooks;
- (f) paid insufficient attention to oral work;
- (g) 'spoon-fed' students too much (and with too many facts to be memorized);
- (h) had limited expertise in English;
- (i) received inadequate pre-service and in-service education;
- (j) afforded students little opportunity for student-driven work.

Both pre-/in-service teacher training courses mostly focus on passing on to students and teachers the knowledge of grammar, as it is believed that such a knowledge will adequately equip them for successful teaching (Kerr, 1993; Wright and Bolitho; Hales, 1997). Edge (1988a) argues that this emphasis fails to improve both the learners' grammar and to train teachers to be able to teach effectively. This way of transmitting grammar knowledge from teacher trainer to student teachers does not correspond with the current interactive and communicative practice in English teaching and learning methodology and content.

The transmission mode of teacher training has failed to improve students' linguistic knowledge and their language proficiency. To be able to present their explanations

effectively to the students, they must have adequate language fluency. A good knowledge of the English language and adequate language competence reinforce and enhance teaching effectiveness, resulting in better learning (Lange, 1990; Cullen, 1994). Murdoch (1994) remarks that being fluent in English is the bedrock for an English teacher, and this must be a priority in the syllabus of any teacher training course (TE) aside from the learning of grammar. Berry (1990) argues that it is time that the separation in teacher education between linguistics and pedagogy needs to be reduced in order to make teacher training more effective in terms of grammar teaching and improving students' language proficiency. This can be achieved through more student involvement, as this gives student teachers more opportunity to use the language and thus provides them with the opportunity to improve their own language use.

Language proficiency also leads to the issue of whether native English teachers are better than non-native English teachers (c.f. Tables 5.28 – 5.31). Edge (1988b), Widdowson (1992), and Medgyes (1992) suggest that non-native English teachers can be more advantageous in teaching English as they have been English learners themselves, so they are more empathetic to the problems their students are facing, and therefore are in a better position to help them. As they have learnt about how the English language works, they can provide linguistic information to their students and thus help them learn better. Further, they may share the same MT, and that can be utilized effectively for clarification and explanation. This is especially beneficial in a largely non-native context, which applies to the situation in Macau.

Palmer (1993) remarks that in-service teacher training courses often hope to change and improve teaching. This does not always happen, as these courses are often very intensive and trainees do not always have the time to experiment on the workability of new ideas in their classroom practice, so they retain their formerly-established classroom routines and behaviors. No change or improvement happens. Also, the effectiveness of any in-service TE courses must match the needs of the trainees, otherwise the in-service training is meaningless and fruitless. In Macau, not only are in-service courses in English teaching of limited duration, but they often take little account of learners' needs and abilities. For TE courses to be more effective and successful, a symbiotic relationship must be established between language study, methodology, language improvement and learners' needs (Murdoch, 1994).

The data collected indicate that English teachers in Macau can use between 80% and 100% Cantonese to teach English in the primary sections (see also 6.2 (i) later). In the secondary sections, teachers can use up to 60% Cantonese to explain grammar. They claimed that this made learning easier as students understood better in their MT. Another possible reason for the situation is that these teachers lack the proficiency and fluency needed to conduct and explain lessons in the target language. These teachers also claimed that their teacher training had adequately trained them to teach. If this is the case, then they should be able to use English to teach and to be able to make students understand the lessons, yet this component had been missing in the training they had received, so teachers were unable to conduct their teaching and give explanations properly through the target language, without making students confused.

Teachers used didactic and whole-class teaching to a very large extent, giving the reason for this as class size (c.f. Tables 5.43 and 5.44). This suggests that the training courses had not prepared them to handle large classes, and had not taught them that teaching and learning effectiveness suffers using the traditional teaching method, and that problems created by large classes can be minimized through the use of different, more stimulating teaching methods (c.f. Nolasco and Arthur, 1988; Coleman, 1997).

The data also reveal that English teaching in Macau covers mainly grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Teachers have received effective training on learning grammar, so they can teach grammar well and confidently. Also learning and reading comprehension uses largely grammar and vocabulary, which is learnt by heart.

The lack of emphasis placed on listening, speaking and writing can be explained by the focus on grammar and vocabulary learning. If teachers themselves have been trained mainly only in grammar, so that they themselves lack proficiency in speaking, it is understandable that they do not use speaking in class, and so they simply teach grammar.

The data indicate that the teacher training that these teachers had received had not prepared them adequately for their work. The content of such courses in Macau need to be re-evaluated and modified to prepare teachers more effectively.

- (d) *What student-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?*

The data reveal a considerable discrepancy between the ideal situation of student-related factors and the actual situation in Macau. For example, in Macau it was found (c.f. Tables 5.33 – 5.36) that students were considered to be:

- (a) unable to speak or use English, even after fifteen years of learning English;
- (b) lazy, unmotivated and uninterested in learning English;
- (c) not using, and did not need to use, English outside classes;
- (d) only learning English in order to pass tests;
- (e) only learning what the teacher had prescribed;
- (f) unmotivated to learn English because of the opportunity to repeat classes;
- (g) overloaded with other subjects;
- (h) reliant on memorization, which led to poor learning;
- (i) unable to relate English to other subjects;
- (j) reluctant to practice or display their English in front of others for fear of losing face.

Learning effectiveness is improved if students have positive attitudes towards the learning of the target language, with the motivation and intention to acculturate themselves to the target language (Schumann, 1978; Stern, 1983; Crookes and Schmidt, 1991, Stauble, 1980; Richard-Amato, 1996). These attitudes and motivation, be they

instrumental or integrative, are powerful factors for language learning success or failure (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Lukmank 1972; Oller, Hudson, and Liu, 1977).

Further, students' self-esteem, self-confidence, self-security, a preference for clearly, logically and systematically structured lessons delivered in diverse teaching methods, through a variety of learning materials, a moderate amount of learning anxiety (Brown, 1987) all lead to improved language performance (Heyde, 1979; Oller, 1981; Stevick, 1976), so it is important that these students' aspects have to be encouraged in order to achieve successful and effective English learning. The data reveal that, in Macau, these features are largely lacking.

Learning a foreign language young enhances the child's ability to acquire more native-like proficiency and fluency (Ellis, 1985; Bongaerts *et al.*, 1997; Ioup, 1995; Singleton *et al.*, 1995). Students in Macau start learning English as young as 1, and that should be a great advantage to language acquisition. However, having learnt English for over 13 and even 15 years, students can neither understand nor use English properly or effectively. This is because most of the learner factors leading to more effective English learning mentioned above are missing in Macau students, resulting in ineffective English teaching, learning and achievements.

Students in Macau, the data indicated, rely on memorization instead of utilizing more effective learning strategies in learning (e.g. Table 5.32). For many of them, their sole learning motivation is to pass tests and exams (c.f. Table 5.34). Knowledge obtained is,

therefore, only superficial. Students use the same studying technique – memorization – for whatever they learn. Little wonder it is that the learning outcome is ineffective, resulting in continuous failure and students' poor foundation. This is detrimental to learning and they may simply give up trying and learning. The ineffective learning strategies and continuous failures and poor foundation are a cycle, and they are always with the students, regardless of their grade.

The intention of regarding English learning as an opportunity to learn about another culture through language was missing. Students study the night before the tests and exams, forgetting everything afterwards (see the questionnaire survey in this thesis). Such studying techniques can be detrimental to language learning, resulting in ineffective learning outcomes and continuous failure, which reduces students' interest, motivation and confidence in learning. Little wonder it is that their standards and achievements in English remain low despite years of learning. Such a phenomenon began soon after students start learning English, resulting in poor foundations as they move up to higher grades in the education ladder.

Poor language learning strategies can result in ineffective learning outcomes (Tripp, 1970). Effective language learners have strong motivations for learning. They are ready to adapt to different conditions (Rubin, 1975; Naiman *et al.*, 1978), and to seize opportunities to use the language (the social/affective strategy). They also organize, categorize and analyze learning, and monitor its accuracy, using various processing strategies such as metacognitive and cognitive strategies (O'Malley *et al.*, 1985). Such

learners are flexible, varying their strategies to suit different tasks, situations, stages and purposes (Rubin, 1975). By contrast, ineffective learners lack flexibility and apply strategies inappropriately, resulting in ineffective learning (Wender, 1987).

To improve L2 learning, it is essential to find out what learning strategies students use and to teach them effective learning strategies (Vann and Abraham, 1990), which meet their needs, cognitive styles and learning expectations (Richard-Amato, 1996). Also, a knowledge of various learning strategies provide insights for both teachers and pupils into how learning is processed, resulting in effective learning outcomes (Fleming and Walls, 1998).

One has to be cautious in being too dismissive of rote learning, memorization, putative low-level cognitive strategies, large classes and putative teacher-centred teaching. Research by Biggs (1996a; 1996b), Marton *et al.* (1996) and Dahlin and Watkins (2000) suggests that it may be a Western misperception to regard such issues negatively, as problems, because: (a) Asian students achieve highly on international measures of performance; (b) repetition and memorization do not preclude, indeed they can lead to, understanding, deep rather than superficial learning, high level cognitive strategies and the creation of a 'deep impression' of material on the Chinese learner's mind; (c) many Chinese teachers handle large classes in cognitively engaging ways (i.e. the separation of teacher-centred teaching from learner-centred learning is untenable). That said, the evidence presented in this thesis from the teachers in Macau, whilst not questioning the

findings of Biggs, Marton *et al.* and Dahlin and Watkins, indicate that these may not be true in Macau. Importantly, the teachers who said this in Macau were not Westerners.

- (e) *What factors relating to teaching methodology affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?*

There was a considerable discrepancy between the ideal situation of teaching methodology and the actual teaching methodologies being used in English teaching in Macau (c.f. Tables 5.37 – 5.40). Indeed some 90% of respondents regarded the teaching of English in Macau as only ‘a little bit effective’ or worse (Table 5.39). Several problems were voiced by the respondents (Tables 5.37 – 5.40):

- (a) over-emphasis on didactic, whole-class teaching and ‘spoon-feeding’ of facts;
- (b) limited use of student stimulation through teaching aids;
- (c) over-emphasis on completing an overfull syllabus;
- (d) over-reliance on textbooks;
- (e) limited group and student-centred learning, activities, individual or project work;
- (f) over-emphasis on grammar-translation methods to the neglect of oral work;
- (g) limited student engagement and involvement with English;
- (h) widespread overuse of Chinese in English lessons;
- (i) limited attention to understanding;
- (j) neglect of the significance of student motivation;
- (k) examination-driven teaching and learning.

English learning is rendered ineffective by overuse of approaches such as the grammar-translation, audio-lingual, cognitive-code, direct method and communicative approaches, as the focus is either over- or under-emphasis on grammar learning (Van Pattern, 1986; Ellis, 1988). The role of grammar in English learning is important, as it helps to monitor and check language use and is a device for language acquisition (Kadia, 1988; Schmidt, 1990; Terrell, 1991; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Doughty, 1991; Johnstone, 1995). What makes language learning more effective is to utilize context-, meaning- and task-based grammar activities to enhance learning (the task-based approach (Klapper, 1995)). Task-based activities encourage imagination, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, collaboration, study skills and cross-curricular work through the use of the language and integration of different subject knowledge while handling a task (Hedge, 1993). This approach has become a fundamental concept in language teaching methodology (Seedhouse, 1999). The task is to convince teachers of the benefits of adopting a task-based approach in the teaching and learning of English (Foster, 1999).

The data indicate that English teaching and learning in Macau mainly rely on the grammar-translation approach, using little group, task-based and project work. Grammar is taught through drilling and rote learning, relying heavily on textbook exercises. There is little emphasis on developing students' communicative competence, as classes are large (Table 5.43). In order to control the class and to cover the syllabus, whole-class teaching is widely used (Table 5.37). The use of these two methods – grammar-translation and didactic teaching – may account for why Macau students are not learning English effectively. The knowledge about English remains mostly at the levels of

grammar and grammar exercises. How English should be used in social and meaningful contexts is missing, and English is not well learned.

If English teaching, learning, standards and achievements are to improve, a better teaching method is required, using a combination of approaches such as the communicative and task-based approaches. Such a combination also helps to develop the students' various language skills – reading, speaking, listening and writing – through using the language for classroom communication purposes and for handling different tasks. Meaningful tasks may hold the key to more successful teaching and learning. Achievements may then improve as students become more interested in learning and meaningful tasks. It is a challenge to convince English teachers in Macau that effective teaching, learning and achievements rely on diverse teaching approaches, e.g. communicative and task-based approaches (c.f. Foster, 1999).

Teachers said that their reliance on utilizing grammar-translation and didactic approaches was largely due to large classes. However, teachers in Macau may have insufficient knowledge about how to handle large classes, which need not necessarily be as big a problem as they have suggested. Hayes (1997) has suggested that this problem can be addressed to a certain extent by adopting a more learner-centered approach by involving students more in paired and group work. This may also help to reduce teachers' marking load. Pennington (1995) suggests that changes are far from easy to accomplish, as they need to come from teachers, to modify their concepts concerning classroom teaching and practice; as suggested earlier, teachers' views are firmly fixed.

- (f) *What society-related factors in Macau affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?*

Though there was widespread acknowledgement of the importance of English as the *lingua franca* of many parts of the world, nevertheless many respondents indicated the limited value accorded to this. There was a discrepancy between the role that *recognition* of the importance that English can play in raising achievement and the actual significance accorded to English in Macau. The respondents said that (Tables 5.41 and 5.42):

- (a) Macau is a Chinese society, and that Portuguese is currently regarded by many students as more important than English as a second language in Macau;
- (b) Chinese rather than English is predominantly the language of instruction, and Chinese is frequently overused in English lessons;
- (c) English is not needed for employment, daily life and social life in Macau;
- (d) Students do not accord English important in Macau;
- (e) Macau is not an English environment;
- (f) Possibilities for exposure to English in Macau are limited;

English is the world's *lingua franca* to facilitate aspects such as personal and global communication, international trade, better job prospects, modernization and industrialization (Brumfit, 1982; Widdowson, 1987; Pennycook, 1994; Abbott, 1992; Crystal, 1997). The data indicate that the importance of English has been formally

acknowledged in Macau, and it is a school subject for students aged 3, when they start to receive formal education. Children even start learning the English alphabet and some simple vocabulary informally at the age of 1, when they attend nursery (*source*: personal communications with parents and teachers, and personal observation). Despite this, there are several problems, outlined earlier.

The need for improvement is not regarded as so urgent in Macau: English is not currently needed for most jobs in Macau, as most occupations in Macau are low-skill based. Macau's major revenue is from tourists' expenditure on gaming and tourism. With over 93% of tourists from Cantonese- or Mandarin-speaking regions (Hong Kong, China and Taiwan), there is little demand for English in this industry. The need for English is minimized further as Macau is not an international city, though it has export businesses with some English speaking countries. The need for English for jobs is limited. The more attractive side of English learning – being an educational opportunity to learn about another culture through its language – has not been included in curricula.

(g) *What school-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?*

With regard to school-related factors, the data reveal further discrepancies between the ideal and the actual situation for English teaching in Macau. Respondents said that (Tables 5.43 and 5.44):

- (a) large classes placed an enormous constraint on possibilities for teaching (the modal average class size was between 41 and 50 students, though 25% of average class sizes were over 50 students);
- (b) large classes limited the possibilities for oral work and group work;
- (c) large classes led to didactic teaching, passive learning, textbook-driven teaching, and student boredom;
- (d) mixed ability grouping restricted the opportunities for well-matched teaching;
- (e) students had too many subjects to study;
- (f) timetabling sometimes placed English lessons at unsympathetic times of the day.

The evidence on class size suggests several important points:

- Small classes are associated with higher student achievement in all grades (Glass and Smith, 1978; Kickbusch, 1996). Benefits were strongest in classes of 20 or less, and less noticeable in classes of over 20. Small classes led to superior instruction and raised teacher morale;
- The small positive effect of reduced class size on students' achievements (Slavin, 1989) did not persist after their reduced class experience;
- Reducing class size is especially beneficial for disadvantaged and minority students (Mosteller, 1995; Achilles *et al*, 1996; Kickbusch, 1996; Wenglinsky, 1997). However, small classes were unlikely to produce positive effects if teachers did not change their instructional methods (Robinson and Wittebols, 1986);

- Student achievement fell as the student/teacher ratio increased for every student above a 1:18 ratio (Ferguson, 1991), but teacher quality was more decisive than class size in raising student achievement;
- Class size reduction in the early grades (1-3) leads to higher student achievement, though its effects are less the higher one progresses through the grades (4-12) (Robinson, 1990; Finn *et al.*, 1998), and significant effects of class size reduction on student achievement (up to ten percentage points) appear when class size is reduced to 15-20 students (Pritchard, 1999);
- Class size appears to have more influence on student attitudes, attention, and motivation than on academic achievement (Kickbusch, 1996).

Class size had an effect when: (a) it was reduced to fewer than 20 (Pritchard, 1999) or 30 (Kickbusch, 1996), and in classes above 20 its effects were slight; (b) it was combined with teaching styles, e.g. in terms of greater individualized attention, less concern to maintain order, greater flexibility of teaching style (Kickbusch, 1996; Galton *et al.*, 1996; Pritchard, 1999). The message is clear for Macau: reducing class size alone might not bring much change if it is not accompanied by significant changes in teaching styles, away from didactic teaching. Smaller class sizes are necessary rather than sufficient conditions for raising student achievement; reducing class size enables other changes to occur (e.g. in pedagogy) (McRobbie *et al.*, 1998). To change teaching styles in Macau, as suggested earlier, will require considerable teacher development and greatly reduced class size (by up to 70%). Developing teacher quality might be equally important as

reducing class size. The comment that reducing class size increases student motivation is important, given the problems of motivating students in Macau.

(h) What assessment-related factors affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?

The situation reported in Macau is highly problematical in respect of assessment. Indeed assessment as testing is a major feature of the education system in Macau, starting with kindergarten children who learn, at three years of age, that they pass or fail tests. Respondents said that (Tables 5.45 and 5.49):

- (a) tests and examinations dominated both the curriculum and assessment, rendering it narrow and rigidly syllabus-driven;
- (b) there was considerably too much testing and too many examinations;
- (c) assessment was overwhelmingly construed as teacher-set summative tests of students' abilities to reproduce parcels of knowledge;
- (d) tests and examinations were fair ways of testing what students had learnt, and, indeed, were necessary in order to motivate students to learn;
- (e) the need to pass tests and examinations was driving students' learning and teachers' teaching;
- (f) tests build in failure and superficial learning;
- (g) tests and examinations led to rote learning, didactic teaching, textbook-driven methods, drill and memorization, superficial learning, and spoon-feeding of students;

- (h) tests and examinations were very widespread yet contributed to student demotivation;
- (i) assessments other than by summative tests were rare;
- (j) student self-assessment and diagnostic assessments were very rare;
- (k) students resented tests and examinations;
- (l) teachers did not know very much about other forms of assessment;
- (m) many teachers did not regard their limited awareness of other forms of assessment as particularly problematical;
- (n) students would not learn material that was not to be tested;
- (o) tests restricted student engagement with English;
- (p) teachers who had higher formal qualifications regarded the testing issue as much more problematical than those with lower formal qualifications.

The worry here is that, despite the very substantial problems with the extent, nature, purposes, uses and effects of testing in Macau, nevertheless, as currently construed, assessment as testing is being practiced routinely in Macau, both in the English curriculum and across the curriculum, and the will to change was not found.

Cohen *et al.* (1996) have commented on the limitations of summative/achievement tests, as they can be detrimental to learning morale and effectiveness as students' confidence and motivation are affected by the definite 'pass' and 'fail' that they receive (students in Macau either pass or fail tests, and tests take up one teaching day in ten). To improve the situation, students need to be involved in their own assessments (Cohen *et al.* 1996; Harris, 1997). Again, the learner-centered approach has a role to play. It employs more forms of assessment, such as diagnostic, formative and ipsative assessments, and it

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requires students to take a more active participation in terms of goal-setting, choice of teaching and learning methodology, personal investment in, and reflection on, their learning and progress. They may then become more motivated in monitoring, diagnosing, developing and mastering their learning progress and achievements (Tudor, 1996). Students' involvement in monitoring their own progress also helps to lessen the teachers' workload in spending time marking tests and exams, as assessment no longer relies on tests and exams alone (Oskarsson, 1989).

Currently, assessment in Macau is testing of students' abilities to recall and reproduce facts. However, even if such assessment became more ipsative, diagnostic and formative, it would still leave intact the facts-driven curriculum. Assessment and curricula go together. Hence for more motivated learning and English improvement, assessment needs to move towards 'authentic assessment' of authentic tasks (Tombari and Borich, 1999), e.g. through group, project, task-based and communicative approaches, 'real world' tasks, and student-centred learning (c.f. Black 1998). Teachers in Macau did not seem to have considered, or know about, authentic assessment.

The data reveal clearly that in Macau tests and exams are the major and maybe the only means of assessing students. They are also the means of motivating students to learn, but they have reduced rather than increased students' motivation for learning English – they learn English to pass the test, rather than *vice versa*. Many students simply give up when failure is so predictable and passing is so seldom achieved.

If English standards and achievements are to improve, testing must be reduced. The sole reliance on tests and exams in Macau needs to change, and wider assessment modes, e.g. diagnostic, formative, ipsative and authentic assessments, need to be integrated into the assessment, curricular and pedagogic practices in Macau.

- (i) *What language-related factors (e.g. use of mother tongue) affect the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how significant are these factors?*

Several language-related issues were reported by respondents (Table 5.50), which reveal the discrepancy between the ideal and the actual situation in Macau, e.g.:

- (a) Teachers were equivocal on the importance of students knowing about English culture;
- (b) English was seen as important in a general sense though students did not always regard English as important in the context of Macau;
- (c) there was over-use of Chinese in English lessons (see 6.2 (c) earlier).

With regard to the importance of learning about the English culture, English learning in Macau has been defined as the teaching and learning of grammar, and language success depends on how effectively learners can produce and understand well-formed sentences, excluding the social and cultural dimensions of language learning. Exclusion of the cultural element can contribute to ineffective language teaching and learning (Doye,

1999); language learning includes more than learning the linguistic aspects; it also includes cultural knowledge (Hyde, 1994). Excluding the cultural element from language teaching and learning is like learning a language in a sociolinguistic vacuum, which may result in ineffective learning outcomes and achievements (Marcus and Slansky, 1994). The relationship between language and culture is complex and cannot be separated (Zizi, 1991; Buttjes and Byram, 1991; Fairclough, 1992), so learning a language and learning the culture simultaneously may reinforce each other in the language acquisition process. Therefore, it is important to cultivate in students a cultural awareness while teaching the language (James and Garrett, 1992; Mughan, 1998). Also, for students to acquire communicative competence more effectively, it is important for students to acquire the cultural contexts of English use and of all its written and unwritten rules.

The data indicate that English teachers in Macau to a very large extent do not include English culture in the teaching of English. They do not accept that excluding this can be an important factor in ineffective teaching and learning. They do not provide access to the cross-cultural perspectives on learning the culture of another language. If English teaching, learning and achievements are to improve in Macau, maybe the cultural aspects of English learning need to be integrated into the teaching and learning process. Of course, this may render the learning of English less purely or narrowly instrumental in Macau (e.g. for employment, travel or higher education), and this requires a change of perspective in Macau on the purposes of learning English.

With regard to use of the mother tongue (MT) in English lessons, the more recent practice in the teaching of English as a foreign language – from the focus on a systematic teaching of linguistic structures to the acquisition of communicative competence through continuous target language input of the target language (TL) – has had some impact on the use of mother tongue for the teaching of English (Corder, 1983). As Harbord (1992) puts it, in order to develop students' language competency, English should be used as much as possible. It is clear that students need to be exposed to English at least in the classroom as much as possible in order to develop their language ability and skills, so that they will be able to learn and use the language more effectively. However, the empirical data gathered for this revealed that English is not the major working language in the English classroom in Macau. On the contrary, it is Chinese (in written form), and Cantonese (in spoken form), and it can be used for between 80% and 100% in lower primary school and 60% in secondary school English lessons. (For further discussion of the literature on MT, refer to the literature review in this thesis).

Macau teachers relying heavily on MT can be related to whether they are proficient enough in English to be able to speak and explain comprehensibly in English. If they are not proficient in English then they use Cantonese for teaching. These teachers may not have been properly trained linguistically and pedagogically to enable them to teach English effectively (see (6.2 (c))). Further, some teachers are admitted into training programs despite poor English ability. After their training, some teachers are considered competent to teach English, though their linguistic knowledge and skills have not improved sufficiently. Some Chinese teachers of English in Macau have considerable

difficulty in speaking and understanding spoken English. Both data sources have demonstrated clearly that excessive use of MT in Macau can be a possible explanation for some of the ineffectiveness of English teaching, learning and achievements in Macau.

(j) *What can be done to improve English teaching and learning in Macau?*

The chapter has exposed the considerable gulf between the ideal practice of English teaching and learning as set out in the literature, and the actual situation that obtains in Macau. In order to try to address these issues, respondents were asked to suggest ways to improve. They said that (Tables 5.51 and 5.52):

- (a) reducing class size was extremely important;
- (b) more emphasis was needed on understanding students' needs and learning difficulties, and translating these into practice;
- (c) greater flexibility should be given in the English curriculum, with less rigidity in adhering to the syllabus, reduction in the syllabus size and detail, reduction of the facts-driven English curriculum and textbook driven and exercise-based teaching;
- (d) greater attention should be given to motivating and engaging students;
- (e) more active and motivating methods were needed;
- (f) more resources were required;
- (g) the use of Chinese should be confined to younger classes;
- (h) more practice should be given in speaking and communication;
- (i) increased principal support for change was needed;

- (j) testing should be reduced very significantly;
- (k) emphasis should be placed on deep learning, thinking and understanding;
- (l) communicative approaches, and speaking and listening should have a much higher profile;
- (m) English teaching should not be driven solely by University entrance requirements;
- (n) more student self-monitoring and self-assessment and non-test-driven forms of assessment should be adopted;
- (o) diagnostic teaching and greater matching and differentiation should be practiced;
- (p) teachers should build a firmer foundation for further study in students;
- (q) quality and understanding should replace quantity of student learning and syllabuses, and their consequent spoon-feeding teaching methods;
- (r) more native speakers of English should be employed, particularly for older students;
- (s) greater subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and assessment knowledge were required by teachers of English in Macau (e.g. at pre-service and in-service levels);
- (t) older teachers and those with lower formal qualifications should become more critical of the English teaching practices in the school;
- (u) fewer opportunities should be given for students to repeat courses;
- (v) greater parental support should be given to English learning;
- (w) English learning should move from teacher-centered teaching to learner-centered learning;
- (x) The culture of student compliance and passivity has to be broken.

This is a huge agenda. The fact that it is so vast, and that it touches every aspect of the English curriculum, indicates not only the widespread problems that exist in Macau, but that the existing system will be very difficult to break. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the several elements identified here combine to render the system resistant to change unless the political and senior managerial will to change it is guaranteed. A lever of change is required, and, given the Chinese culture alluded to earlier, wherein seniority is accorded significance, this suggests that change must come from the senior managers and principals of schools.

The final chapter of this thesis draws together the material raised so far, and suggests some conclusions from, and implications of, the data, the literature, and the analysis provided in this chapter, to set an agenda for reform in Macau. From the analysis spring recommendations for improvement.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter summarizes the research findings from the empirical study and then, based on these, draws implications and recommendations for improvements in Macau. Finally a critique of the research is made, and recommendations for future research are suggested.

7.2. Conclusions and implications

The purpose of the thesis (see chapter 3) was to identify the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Macau, with reference to the ideal type of English language teaching and learning recommended by the literature, and to ascertain the impact of various factors on learning effectiveness in Macau. The model of effective English teaching and learning from the literature was complex and wide-ranging, including:

1. the choice of a curriculum model;
2. the effectiveness of teaching methodology and assessment on motivating students and improving language learning;
3. the incorporation of the target language culture into learning;
4. the proper choice and use of ELT textbooks;
5. efficient and proficient L2 teachers, either non-native or native English speaking;

6. the provision of pre- and in-service teacher training for L2 teachers to upgrade them on both language efficiency and teaching efficiency;
7. the moderate use of the mother tongue to improve English learning.

From an empirical investigation it was found that the effectiveness of English language teaching, learning and achievements in Macau was very largely poor and problematical. It was poor in the senses that the quality and effectiveness of teaching, learning and achievements, according to the perceptions of the representative sample of teachers, were weak. It was problematical in the sense that there were structural, contextual, cultural, historical, curricular, psychological, pedagogical causes and practices which were not only deep-seated, but mutually reinforcing, creating, as was alluded to in chapters 5 and 6, a hermetically sealed system which is likely to be difficult to break. The empirical findings were reported and discussed in chapters 5 and 6. Here we shall concentrate on some key points and implications which can be drawn from them.

(a) *In terms of student achievement*: this was perceived to be a significant problem, and English performance was weak in all aspects, particularly speaking and writing. Structural factors impacted negatively on achievement, e.g. class size, opportunities for students to repeat courses, and teachers whose first language was not English. Hence an important implication is that steps should be taken to reduce class size in English lessons, so that communicative and oral work can take place. One further implication is that opportunities for students to repeat a year should be reduced.

Implications here also relate to teacher expertise. The data revealed that teachers relied heavily on didactic, whole-class, textbook-driven teaching, all features of ineffective teaching set out in the literature review, which they claimed to be the consequence of large class sizes. These responses suggest that teachers had not received proper pre- and in-service education to enable them to utilize diverse teaching methods to achieve effective teaching and to address problems caused by large classes. This suggests that higher quality initial teacher education, and more high quality in-service teacher education needs to be provided, including coverage of subject and pedagogical knowledge, both features that the model of good practice in ELT suggested were important in the literature review. Further, consideration should be given to testing non-native teachers' English proficiency, and providing support to enhance their proficiency, a factor which was seen as important in the literature review, particularly if, as the literature review suggested, mother tongue usage in ELT classrooms is to be reduced. In these respects perhaps experts in the teaching of English could be brought into Macau and should be employed to run in-service development and support. This latter, of course, is a suggestion rather than an implication, arising from the findings.

(b) *In terms of student motivation*: this was a significant problem, and was underlined by the fact that English for University entrance or as an international language was seen to have limited impact on student motivation to learn – a factor whose importance was underlined in the literature review as contributing to effective learning. Further, local cultural factors and external environmental factors (e.g. the lack of family support for English, and the lack of opportunity or need to use English) exerted a negative influence on English, all factors which, as the literature review

suggested, were important for effective learning. Related student factors, e.g. compliance cultures and loss of face, impaired learning and achievement.

Implications from these findings suggest that attention should be given to fostering student motivation in learning English. Here greater emphasis should be placed on student-centered teaching rather than simply on covering the subject. The literature review accorded student motivation a central place in the model of effective learning.

(c) *In terms of curricula:* the content and approaches to English teaching showed an over-reliance on grammar-translation and under-use of oral work. The widespread and very heavy use of testing and examinations exerted a powerful negative effect on motivation, curricula, teaching, learning, and achievement. Teacher-related and curriculum-related factors (e.g. lack of expertise, inability to motivate, over-reliance on testing, spoon-feeding and rigid adherence to a facts-driven curriculum) exerted a negative effect on student achievement.

The implications from these curricular matters suggest that: greater attention should be paid to quality control and building high quality curricula (see the model of effective learning set out in the literature review). Further, speaking and writing need particular attention, including far greater opportunities for speaking. Syllabuses should be reduced in terms of facts and superficial knowledge, and overfull, narrow and rigid curricula and syllabuses should be reduced in order to enable more understanding-oriented activities to take place. Generally, curricula should be regarded as more fluid and changeable, in accordance with students' needs, the corollary of which is that teachers should have greater autonomy over English

teaching, within an agreed framework. The model of effective curricula set out in the literature review suggested that a Tylerian framework, whilst useful, has limitations in terms of flexibility, student-centredness and negotiability. The model of curricula in Macau showed strong Tylerian features. The ideal model, it was suggested, was far more learner-centered. Over-reliance on grammar-translation methods needs to be broken, with communicative and task-based methods given greater priority. Emphasis should be placed on understanding and use rather than on repetition without understanding, a feature of effective learning set out in the literature review. Further, some emphasis could be placed on learning about English cultures. These were important features of effective teaching methodology in the literature review.

With regard to testing and examinations: standardized examinations should be introduced in Macau, yet the amount of testing should be reduced drastically, indeed reliance on testing as the main or sole motivator for teaching and learning, needs to be broken. Further, newer and more student-centered forms of assessment and diagnostic teaching should be developed, features both suggested in the 'ideal model' of teaching in the literature review, and emphasis should be placed on diagnostic assessment rather than on passing and failing. The culture of testing and being tested needs to be broken, starting at the kindergarten levels of schooling, and fear of failure (which leads to fear of trying) needs to be broken by reducing the frequency and necessity for over-reliance on testing. One implication of changing the present testing situation is that marking loads and testing loads on teachers would be reduced drastically. The model of effective learning set out in the literature review argued for limited and varied assessment, being formative, diagnostic and student-driven (e.g. facilitated student self-assessment) – ipsative assessment.

Curricular implications also impact on the issue of preparation for University entrance, and the implication here is that University entrance should not be given the sole priority that it is frequently given in English curricula. Indeed, University entrance examinations need to consider requiring a specified English level to be reached, possibly through the use of internationally recognized tests of English, but this is a suggestion rather than a direct implication from the findings.

(d) *In terms of teaching and learning methods:* poor, unvaried, frequently didactic teaching and learning methods were used. There was over-reliance on textbooks and a facts-driven, spoon-feeding curriculum. The literature review indicated that, whilst ELT textbooks can be useful in structuring teaching, slavish adherence to them, overuse, and their potential narrowing of learning and content, were detrimental to effectiveness. Misuse and overuse of textbooks were seen as major reasons for poor performance in the literature. These findings suggest a comprehensive set of implications: a richer environment for English needs to be cultivated, in which students are encouraged to speak in English, in a safe and supportive environment, all factors of effective teaching which were set out in the model of effectiveness in the literature review.

The need for fluency in English speaking should be promoted, and, indeed, the use of Chinese in English lessons should be reduced considerably, a feature which accords with the suggestion for reducing mother-tongue usage in the model of effective ELT in the literature review. Within this environment, reliance on drill, rote, memorization and simple repetition should be broken and greater emphasis should be placed on

speaking English. The emphasis should be placed on deep rather than superficial learning, and active learning and student-centered learning should be promoted, features of effective teaching which were set out in the literature review. Indeed the model of effective learning set out in the literature review emphasized the importance of students' meaningful learning. In this, superficial strategies, e.g. repetition and memorization, are complemented by higher order thinking, meaning making and metacognition. Generally, rote, didactic and repetitive methods, whilst having a place in English learning, were seen, in the literature review, to cause significant problems in learning, motivation and effectiveness. Didactic teaching methods should be reduced significantly and a far greater range of teaching styles should be employed. The findings suggest that whole-class teaching should be reduced, with group, and project-based learning utilized more.

7.3. Implementation of the recommendations

To implement all these recommendations in Macau will be difficult. Chapters 2, 5 and 6 showed that, because Macau's education system is 93% in the hands of private organizations, the role of the state is limited in effecting change through mandate. The tradition of school autonomy in the private sector is strong, with very considerable power residing with school principals. It was suggested that there is a prevalent mentality of 'command-and-control' and hierarchical management styles by many school principals. The problems to be addressed here are both the *management* as well as the *content* of change and innovation. This chapter will not address these management factors, for this would be to introduce new material into what is intended to be the concluding section of the thesis.

7.4. Critique of the thesis and the need for further research

This thesis was intentionally exploratory. As the first in its field in Macau, the task was to provide an overview of the current situation in Macau. It did not seek to go into detail, but to provide a 'broad brush' approach to the matters under discussion. Inevitably this has meant that some matters have been treated more superficially than they perhaps might deserve.

For example, the literature review set out a wide range of factors which might contribute to a model of effective teaching, learning and achievements of English in Macau. Of course, each of these factors could be studied in more detail both in the literature and the empirical research. However, the intention here was to generate in the literature a sufficient basis, suitably comprehensive and deep, for an empirical investigation to be conducted and an evaluation of the situation of English in Macau to be made. In this respect, the limitations of the literature search were not necessarily a weakness of the study, simply a realistic management of the thesis. Future research could usefully take each of the areas of the literature and expand them in depth and breadth, and use these as the basis for future empirical research into each of the several areas addressed (or, indeed, others).

The empirical investigation was deliberately limited/bounded in its research design, methodology, instrumentation, sampling, addressing of reliability and validity. Similarly the data analysis was careful not to make generalizations beyond the capabilities or boundaries of the data themselves. That said, as indicated in chapter

four, the data were generalizable by virtue of the research design and sampling, and this was an important purpose of the research – to enable an overall, reliable picture of the situation of English in Macau to be made.

Within the brief that it set itself, the research was robust in using a multi-method/multi-instrument approach for data collection, which was rooted in the relevant literature (giving construct validity to the research), and enabled concurrent validity/triangulation to be addressed. Further, the length and coverage of the questionnaire was considerable, enabling useful data to be collected.

Though the research project was intended to provide an introductory overview of issues, it turned out to be larger than originally anticipated, and, given the constraints on the size of the thesis, perhaps insufficient justice was done to the field in terms of focus and depth. This could not have been anticipated, and, on the positive side, it suggests several areas which future research could explore profitably.

On the other hand, the research restricted its sampling to teachers in Macau, excluding, for example, other stakeholders: principals, government officers, teacher educators, parents, employers and students. However, it was felt important to go to the teachers first, as they would have the greatest in-depth knowledge of the situation. It would have been interesting, perhaps, to have administered the questionnaire and to have conducted interviews with other educationists apart from teachers, but this is another study, and for future research. Acknowledging the limitations of this study is a way of clarifying its parameters. Future research could take each of the areas

identified in the empirical research and explore them in much greater depth and detail, covering, for example:

- Student underachievement;
- The assessment of English performance and achievements;
- The impact of local cultural factors and external environmental factors;
- University entrance requirements;
- Raising the profile of English in schools;
- Student motivation and self-esteem, and how to raise them;
- How to develop and implement new forms and practices in English curricula and pedagogy;
- Views of the Chinese learners in Macau, and how Chinese learners address issues of understanding, motivation, creativity and higher order thinking (e.g. the development of metacognition);
- New forms of examinations;
- The issues surrounding native and non-native teachers of English;
- The impact and implications of the localization policy for teachers;
- The nature of the impact of structural factors on achievement;
- Breaking the damaging effects of losing and gaining face in Chinese culture and students;
- Raising teacher expertise and changing their practices.

As mentioned earlier, there is very little published research to provide a local context for Macau relevant to the topic. To the possible concern that some of the discussion in the thesis might lack some local bibliographic references is the issue, mentioned in

chapter six, that the writer's local knowledge and personal communications were important, though, for reasons of privacy, these could not be referenced. The absence of public domain research in Macau is a pity but beyond the control of the researcher; perhaps, as a developing country, this is unsurprising. Indeed, this research is designed to address this very problem.

The picture painted of the situation of English in Macau is grim, even though these were the views of the participants, not of the researcher, and the research design enables generalizations to be made and confidence to be placed in the results. That said, to complement the perception-based data in this study, it would be useful to collect 'hard' data on student and teacher performance. However, this is a huge undertaking, as, currently, there is neither a systematic evidential base in existence in Macau, nor is there an easy mechanism for it to be implemented in Macau, nor might many school principals welcome it, nor might school principals place such data in the public domain, even if they did exist.

7.5. Closing remarks

The thesis has suggested that, for improvements to occur in English teaching, learning and achievements in Macau, innovations and developments will need to be made at all levels of the education service. It has been suggested that changes will need to be made in the content of English curricula, teaching, learning and assessment. For this to occur is not a simple matter, for it requires changes in the deep-seated mentality as well as practices on the parts of major stakeholders. It suggests, further, that management practices in schools will need to change. This is a very big agenda for

reform. To wait for changes in attitude, in the belief that changes in practice will follow, is a long-term strategy which may be too optimistic. Whilst behavioural change can be a consequence of value and attitude changes, it is often the case that it is better to change practices before beliefs, and that changing beliefs will follow (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves 1994). Perhaps both of these are true, depending on the situation. Hence what are being recommended here are changes in several areas and at several levels, to change behaviour, values, and attitudes. All parties can make a start on this if the will to change is present. Whether the will to change exists in Macau is an empirical matter which, itself, is the subject of further research. Whilst it is good to be optimistic, this has to be tempered by a recognition of the enormity of the changes needed in Macau.

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APPENDIX A

LETTERS OF CONSENT

Letter 1: Letter of consent for the interview
Letter 2: Letter of consent for the questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Tang Fun Hei, Joan and I am an English lecturer in the Center for Pre-University Studies (CPU), University of Macau. At present I am doing my Ed. D thesis on the topic of English Teaching, Learning and Achievement in Macau, and the purpose of this research is to identify key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of English Teaching, Learning and Achievement. In order to obtain a full and fair picture of the current situation, it is important to collect the views from English teachers in Macau. It is also the intention that the data and the thesis will lead to improvements in teaching and learning of English in Macau. I am writing to request whether I can interview one experienced English teacher who teaches any of the following grades in your school: Primary 1, Primary 6, Form 3 or Form 5. These choices are made deliberately as part of a stratified sample of crucial stages at which students learn English.

Each interview should last for some 40 minutes and I can come at any time to suit the teacher who has agreed to be interviewed. I enclose the interview questions so that the teacher can have insightful into and preparation for the interview before it takes place. Your helpfulness and support for this project would be highly appreciated, as it can make a significant contribution to this aspect of development of education in Macau.

I can be reached through the following numbers:

Own office:	3974576
General office:	3974582
Mobile Number:	6864134

I would be grateful if you would contact me at your earliest convenience in connection with this request.

Yours truly,

Tang Fun Hei, Joan

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN MACAU

A QUESTIONNAIRE BY TANG FUN HEI

Dear Colleague,


I am an English language lecturer at the University of Macau. I am currently researching for the final part of my doctorate at the University of Durham, United Kingdom. My thesis concerns English language teaching, learning and achievements in Macau schools, and the intention is to make recommendations to raise students' achievements in English in Macau schools. This is a field of research which has much current relevance, and can bring great benefit to Macau. My supervisor is the internationally celebrated researcher in the field, Professor Michael Byram. This study is the first of its kind in Macau, and, therefore, is an important piece of research which can be used to inform policy and practice.

The research uses a combination of methods in order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the situation in Macau. I am writing to ask you if you would be kind enough to take part in this area of the research by completing the attached questionnaire. As you can see, the intention is to provide a detailed picture of English language situation in Macau, and so the questions are necessarily extensive.

I would be very grateful if you would take part in this questionnaire survey. You do not have to identify yourself, and you will not be traced; the results will be anonymized and aggregated so that personal identities are protected. The outcomes are intended to be of direct benefit to Macau, and will abide by the highest standards of scholarship and academic rigour. If you are willing to participate in this I would be grateful if you would complete the questionnaire and return it to me by XXXXXXXX, as follows:

Ms. Tang Fun Hei,
Convenor, English Language Cluster I,
Centre for Pre-University Studies,
University of Macau,
P. O. Box 3001,
Macau.

If you wish to contact me about this questionnaire I can be reached as follows:

 397 4576 (work) 686 4134 (mobile) e-mail: cpufht@umac.mo

Thank you for your kind consideration

APPENDIX B

THE PILOT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

TANG FUN HEI, JOAN

Ed. D. Thesis, University of Durham

Interview Schedule for Semi-Structured Interviews with Teachers of English

1. Please comment on what you think is the level of achievement in English language of students who have just completed Form Five.

Prompts: Form Five students may graduate but their English levels might only reach the level of Form Three students or lower.

Probes: Generally do the students perform up to standard? Give reasons for your answer.
Roughly what percentage are above and below the standard? Give reasons for your answer.

2. What do you consider to be the main purposes of teaching English in Macau?

Prompts: Why do you think that English is taught in Macau schools?

Probes: For what main purposes do you think students are taught English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer (e.g. to get a job/to travel/economic reasons).
For what main reasons do you think students are taught English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

3. How effective do you think the teaching of English is in Macau?

Prompts: Do you think that the teaching of English in Macau is successful?
How well do you think that the teaching of English meets a range of purposes (e.g. to get jobs/for travel/for international business)? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What criteria do you think are important for judging the effectiveness of the teaching of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How effectively does the teaching of English meet the purposes set out in question 2? Give reasons for your answer.
What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses in the way(s) in which English is currently taught in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

4. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

Prompts: At what /for what/ in what ways are the teaching and learning of English in Macau particularly good or particularly bad? (e.g. It may be very good for teaching students to read but bad at teaching them to speak).
What are the teaching and learning of English in Macau good at doing and bad at doing? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What do you consider to be the most and least important reasons to account for the strengths of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
What do you consider to be the most and least important reasons to account for the weaknesses of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

5. What training/qualifications do you/English teachers have/need for teaching English in Macau?

Prompts: Do teachers require any formal qualifications and/or training to teach English in Macau?

Probes: Are the types and levels of teacher qualifications and experience appropriate for English teachers in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequately do you think that your training has prepared you to teach English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What are the problems with initial teacher training for teaching English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequate is the provision for initial training for teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequate is the provision for in-service training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What needs to be done to improve the initial training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What needs to be done to improve the in-service training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What other factors concerning teachers and teacher training do you think are important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language teaching in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

6. In your experience what teaching methods do you think are the most commonly used in English language teaching in Macau, or personally?

Prompts: How do you teach English in class? Give reasons for your answer.
How is English often taught in Macau (from your knowledge)? Give reasons for your answer.
Is there an emphasis on didactic methods or methods which rely on only one or more textbooks? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Why do you think teachers use the methods that you have mentioned above?
What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of these methods? Give reasons for your answer.
Do teachers/you tend to use only one or two methods or several methods? Give reasons for your answer.
How do teachers/you vary their methods to suit the students or to suit the different aspects of the subject?

7. Which aspects of English language teaching do teachers tend to focus on?

Prompts: Do teachers focus more on speaking/reading/writing/listening/grammar etc.?

Probes: Why do you think teachers tend to focus on some aspects more than others?
What are the most and least important reasons for teachers focusing on the aspects of English that have been mentioned? Give reasons for your answer.

8. What student-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with themselves rather than, for example, the teachers; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?

9. What teacher-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with teachers rather than, for example, the students or the curricula; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?

10. How important for effective English teaching and learning do you think it is for teachers of English to be native/mother-tongue speakers in Macau?

Prompts: Should English teachers have English as their first language? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What are the strengths and weaknesses of having native speakers of English as teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer. What are the strengths and weaknesses of having non-native speakers of English as teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

11. What curriculum-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with the English curriculum rather than, for example, the teachers or the students; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?

12. How important do you consider the role of textbooks is in the teaching of English in Macau?

Prompts: To what extent does the teaching of English in Macau rely on one or two textbooks, i.e. how much of the teaching simply follows one or two particular textbooks?

Probes: Much English teaching in Macau is done by simply following one or two text books in detail. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of this? Give reasons for your answer.

If you have identified problems with the use of textbooks, how could these problems be addressed? Give reasons for your answer.

13. Many students are not motivated to learn English in Macau. Why do you think this is the case?

Probes: What role do you think that motivation plays in student achievement in English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

How important do you think motivation is in connection with student achievement of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

14. How/in what ways do you think that assessment helps or impedes students' achievement of English in Macau?

Prompts: Much assessment takes the form of frequent written tests. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of this? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What kinds of assessments are most widely used in English teaching in Macau? What do you consider to be the advantages, problems and disadvantages of these? Give reasons for your answer.

How can assessment be improved in English teaching in Macau in order to improve students' achievements in English? Give reasons for your answer.

15. There are several factors in Macau society and culture which may facilitate and/or inhibit the successful teaching and learning of English in Macau. What do you consider these to be and how important do you consider them to be?

Prompts: Many students may not see the relevance of learning English when they are in a 98% Chinese-speaking community; this may impede their ability or motivation to learn English. How important do you consider this factor to be? Give reasons for your answer.

Macau has recently become part of China, and the emphasis may be less on English than on Mandarin. What do you think the possible effects of this might be on English language teaching and learning in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: How important do you think the effect of the local culture is on learning English; in what ways and to what extent might this affect English

language teaching, learning and achievement in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

What aspects of Macau culture and society do you think are particularly influential in English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how is this influence manifested? Give reasons for your answer.

16. The performance of many Form Five students in English in Macau is poor. What do you consider to be the most and least important factors in accounting for this? Give reasons for your answer.

APPENDIX C
THE REVISED INTERVIEW
SCHEDULE



TANG FUN HEI, JOAN

Ed. D. Thesis, University of Durham

Interview Schedule for Semi-Structured Interviews with Teachers of English

1. Please tell me how long you have been teaching?
2. Please tell me how long you have been teaching English?
3. With which age groups have you mostly taught English?
4. Please comment on what you think is the level of achievement in English language of students who have just completed Form Five.

Prompts: Form Five students may graduate but their English levels might only reach the level of Form Three students or lower.

Probes: Generally do the students perform up to standard? Give reasons for your answer.
Roughly what percentage are above and below the standard? Give reasons for your answer.

5. What do you consider to be the main purposes of teaching English in Macau?

Prompts: Why do you think that English is taught in Macau schools?

Probes: For what main purposes do you think students are taught English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer (e.g. to get a job/to travel/economic reasons).
For what main reasons do you think students are taught English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

6. How effective do you think the teaching of English is in Macau?

Prompts: Do you think that the teaching of English in Macau is successful?
How well do you think that the teaching of English meets a range of purposes (e.g. to get jobs/for travel/for international business)? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What criteria do you think are important for judging the effectiveness of the teaching of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How effectively does the teaching of English meet the purposes set out in question 2? Give reasons for your answer.

7. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

Prompts: At what /for what/ in what ways are the teaching and learning of English in Macau particularly good or particularly bad? (e.g. It may be very good for teaching students to read but bad at teaching them to speak).
What are the teaching and learning of English in Macau good at doing and bad at doing? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What do you consider to be the most and least important reasons to account for the strengths of English language teaching and learning in Macau?
What do you consider to be the most and least important reasons to account for the weaknesses of English language teaching and learning in Macau?

8. What training/qualifications do you/English teachers have/need for teaching English in Macau?

Prompts: Do teachers require any formal qualifications and/or training to teach English in Macau?

Probes: Are the types and levels of teacher qualifications and experience appropriate for English teachers in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequately do you think that your training has prepared you to teach English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What are the problems with initial teacher training for teaching English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequate is the provision for initial training for teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How adequate is the provision for in-service training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What needs to be done to improve the initial training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What needs to be done to improve the in-service training of teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

What other factors concerning teachers and teacher training do you think are important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language teaching in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

9. In your experience what teaching methods do you think are the most commonly used in English language teaching in Macau, or personally?

Prompts: How do you teach English in class? Give reasons for your answer.
How is English often taught in Macau (from your knowledge)? Give reasons for your answer.
Is there an emphasis on didactic methods or methods which rely on only one or more textbooks? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Why do you think teachers use the methods that you have mentioned above?
What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of these methods? Give reasons for your answer.
Do teachers/you tend to use only one or two methods or several methods? Give reasons for your answer.
How do teachers/you vary their methods to suit the students or to suit the different aspects of the subject?

10. Which aspects of English language teaching do teachers tend to focus on?

Prompts: Do teachers focus more on speaking/reading/writing/listening/grammar etc.?

Probes: Why do you think teachers tend to focus on some aspects more than others?
What are the most and least important reasons for teachers focusing on the aspects of English that have been mentioned? Give reasons for your answer.

11. What student-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with themselves rather than, for example, the teachers; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?

12. What teacher-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with teachers rather than, for example, the students or the curricula; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?
How do you think teachers' own English proficiency affects their ability to teach English?

13. What curriculum-related factors do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Students may achieve well or badly in English in schools for a variety of reasons that are connected with the English curriculum rather than, for example, the teachers or the students; what might such factors be? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: Are there any very common factors that you have observed? Why do you think there are such common factors?

14. In what ways do learning methods (strategies) affect the effectiveness of students' English language achievement in Macau?

Prompts: The methods that students use can have an important effect on their achievement. What do you think these effects are (and with reference to which methods)?

Probes: Which particular methods do you think have an important effect?
What effects do you think each particular method has, i.e. what aspects of English language learning effectiveness do you think are affected particularly by each of the methods that you have mentioned?

15. How far do learning methods (strategies) affect the effectiveness of students' English language achievement in Macau?

Prompts The methods that students use can have an important effect on their achievement. How big an effect do you think that these have (and with reference to which methods)?

Probes Which particular methods do you think have a large/small effect?
What effects do you think each particular method has, i.e. what aspects of English language learning effectiveness do you think are affected largely/only to a small extent by each of the methods that you have mentioned?

16. How important do you consider the role of textbooks is in the teaching of English in Macau?

Prompts: To what extent does the teaching of English in Macau rely on one or two textbooks, i.e. how much of the teaching simply follows one or two particular textbooks?

Probes: Much English teaching in Macau is done by simply following one or two text books in detail. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of this? Give reasons for your answer.
If you have identified problems with the use of textbooks, how could these problems be addressed? Give reasons for your answer.
In which aspects of English teaching is most/least use made of text books?

17. Many students are not motivated to learn English in Macau. Why do you think this is the case?

Probes: What role do you think that motivation plays in student achievement in English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
How important do you think motivation is in connection with student achievement of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What aspects of English learning do students seem most/least motivated to learn?

18. How/in what ways do you think that assessment and students' self-assessment helps or impedes students' achievement of English in Macau?

Prompts: There is a lot of assessment of students by teachers in Macau. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of this?
There is little self-assessment by student in English teaching in Macau. Why do you think this is? What are the strengths and weaknesses of using students' self assessment in the teaching and learning of English in Macau?

Probes: Much assessment takes the form of frequent written tests. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of this? Give reasons for your answer.
What kinds of assessments are most widely used in English teaching in Macau? What do you consider to be the advantages, problems and disadvantages of these? Give reasons for your answer.
How can assessment be improved in English teaching in Macau in order to improve students' achievements in English? Give reasons for your answer.

19. How far do you think that assessment and students' self-assessment helps or impedes students' achievement of English in Macau?

Prompts: There is generally a lot of assessment of learning in English teaching. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of this for English learning and achievement?

Probes: In what areas of English language teaching and learning is teacher assessment most/least used?
In what areas of English language teaching and learning is student self-assessment most/least used?
In what areas of English language teaching and learning is teacher assessment most/least effective?
In what areas of English language teaching and learning is student self-assessment most/least effective?

20. What organizational factors (e.g. streaming, mixed ability grouping, time-tabling, hours devoted to teaching English) do you think are the most and least important in accounting for the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of English language learning in Macau?

Prompts: Some aspects of the organization of the schools (e.g. streaming by ability groups, the amount of time given to the teaching of English, when the teaching of English takes place (e.g. at the start/end of the day, at the start/end of the week)) might make a difference to the success of teaching and learning. Please identify some factors like this, and comment on what effect you think they have on the effectiveness of teaching and learning of English.

Probes: What needs to be done/can be done in terms of organizing the time-tabling, classes (e.g. streaming/mixed ability grouping), how many hours are devoted to English teaching in order to improve the teaching and learning of English?

21. How important for effective English teaching and learning do you think it is for teachers of English to be native/mother-tongue speakers in Macau?

Prompts: Should English teachers have English as their first language? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: What are the strengths and weaknesses of having native speakers of English as teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.
What are the strengths and weaknesses of having non-native speakers of English as teachers of English in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

22. How far do you consider that learning English also means learning the culture of the language?

Prompts: Some people think that it is important for students who are learning English to know something of the culture of English-speaking countries. How important do you think that this is?

Probes: What aspects of the English-speaking culture(s) do you think that it important/not important for students to learn?
Whose English culture should be targeted in the English teaching (e.g. the UK, the US, Australia etc.)?

23. In what ways do you think the effectiveness of English teaching and learning will be improved by learning the English culture?

Prompts: Some people think that the learning of English will be improved if students learn the culture of the target English language group. For what

aspects of English teaching and learning do you think that this be particularly relevant?

Probes Whose English culture should be targeted in the English teaching (e.g. the UK, the US, Australia etc.)?
Which aspects of English teaching and learning do you think will be particularly improved/least affected by learning about the culture of the target English-speaking group?

24. How far do you think the effectiveness of English teaching and learning will be improved by learning the English culture?

Prompts: Some people think that it is important for students who are learning English to know something of the culture of English-speaking countries. How important do you think that this is?

Probes Whose English culture should be targeted in the English teaching (e.g. the UK, the US, Australia etc.)?
Which aspects of English teaching and learning do you think will be particularly improved/least affected by learning about the culture of the target English-speaking group?

25. In what ways should the target English culture be included in English teaching and learning?

Prompts: Some people think that it is important for students who are learning English to know something of the culture of English-speaking countries. How can this be done in English teaching and learning in Macau?

Probes Whose English culture should be targeted in the English teaching (e.g. the UK, the US, Australia etc.)?
How/where can teachers include study of the English culture their teaching? Where is it most/least effective?
Which aspects of English teaching and learning do you think will be particularly improved/least affected by learning about the culture of the target English-speaking group?

26. There are several factors in Macau society and culture which may facilitate and/or inhibit the successful teaching and learning of English in Macau. What do you consider these to be and how important do you consider them to be?

Prompts: Many students may not see the relevance of learning English when they are in a 98% Chinese-speaking community; this may impede their ability or motivation to learn English. How important do you consider this factor to be? Give reasons for your answer.

Macau has recently become part of China, and the emphasis may be less on English than on Mandarin. What do you think the possible effects of this might be on English language teaching and learning in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

Probes: How important do you think the effect of the local culture is on learning English; in what ways and to what extent might this affect English language teaching, learning and achievement in Macau? Give reasons for your answer.

What aspects of Macau culture and society do you think are particularly influential in English language teaching and learning in Macau, and how is this influence manifested? Give reasons for your answer.

27. The performance of many Form Five students in English in Macau is poor. What do you consider to be the most and least important factors in accounting for this? Give reasons for your answer.

28. Do you use Chinese or English as the medium of instruction in your English teaching classes?

29. How much do you use English or Chinese in your English teaching?

Prompt For what percentage of the time in your English lessons do you use English and Chinese?

Probes For what/when do you use more English than Chinese and for what do you use more Chinese than English?

30. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of using Chinese medium and English medium in teaching English?

Prompts: There are advantages and disadvantages in using Chinese during English lessons. What do you think they are, and for what aspects of English teaching and learning do you think using Chinese during English lessons are most/least useful and relevant?

There are advantages and disadvantages in using English only during English lessons. What do you think they are, and for what aspects of English teaching and learning do you think using only English during English lessons are most/least useful and relevant?

Probe Why do you think that teachers prefer to use Cantonese and even Mandarin in teaching English?

31. What do you think needs to be done to improve English language teaching and learning in Macau?

APPENDIX D

THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN MACAU

A QUESTIONNAIRE BY TANG FUN HEI

Dear Colleague,


I am an English language lecturer at the University of Macau. I am currently researching for the final part of my doctorate at the University of Durham, United Kingdom. My thesis concerns English language teaching, learning and achievements in Macau schools, and the intention is to make recommendations to raise students' achievements in English in Macau schools. This is a field of research which has much current relevance, and can bring great benefit to Macau. My supervisor is the internationally celebrated researcher in the field, Professor Michael Byram. This study is the first of its kind in Macau, and, therefore, is an important piece of research which can be used to inform policy and practice.

The research uses a combination of methods in order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the situation in Macau. I am writing to ask you if you would be kind enough to take part in this area of the research by completing the attached questionnaire. As you can see, the intention is to provide a detailed picture of English language situation in Macau, and so the questions are necessarily extensive.

I would be very grateful if you would take part in this questionnaire survey. You do not have to identify yourself, and you will not be traced; the results will be anonymized and aggregated so that personal identities are protected. The outcomes are intended to be of direct benefit to Macau, and will abide by the highest standards of scholarship and academic rigour. If you are willing to participate in this I would be grateful if you would complete the questionnaire and return it to me by XXXXXXXX, as follows:

Ms. Tang Fun Hei,
Convenor, English Language Cluster I,
Centre for Pre-University Studies,
University of Macau,
P. O. Box 3001,
Macau.

If you wish to contact me about this questionnaire I can be reached as follows:

 397 4576 (work) 686 4134 (mobile) e-mail: cpufht@umac.mo

Thank you for your kind consideration

ENGLISH TEACHING, LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN MACAU

Section A: Background details

1. Sex Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age (in years) 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50+ ☐
3. Number of years in teaching 1-5 ☐ 6-14 ☐ 15-24 ☐ 25+ ☐
4. Were you specifically trained to teach English? Yes ☐ No ☐
5. What is your highest qualification? (Please tick one only)
Form 6 ☐ Teacher's certificate/Diploma ☐ First degree ☐ Higher degree ☐
6. How many years have you been teaching English? (please tick one only)
1-5 ☐ 6-14 ☐ 15-24 ☐ 25 + ☐
7. What is the highest qualification that you have for teaching English in Macau?
Form 6 ☐ Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ First degree ☐ Higher degree ☐
8. Is English your mother tongue? Yes ☐ No ☐
9. What is the main medium of instruction in your school (please tick one only)
Chinese ☐ English ☐ Portuguese ☐ Other ☐
10. Which grade/level do you *mainly* teach at present? (please tick one only)
P1-P3 ☐ P4-P6 ☐ F1-F3 ☐ F4-F6 ☐
11. What kind of school do you currently work in? (please tick one only)
Government school ☐ Private School - religious ☐ Private school - non-religious ☐
12. Approximately how many **hours** of in-service training/courses for English teaching have you attended in the last year?
0-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31+ ☐
13. How many students are there in the ***smallest class*** that you teach?
Less than 30 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Over 60 ☐
14. How many students are there in the ***largest class*** that you teach?
Less than 30 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Over 60 ☐
15. What is the ***average number*** of students in the classes that you teach?
Less than 30 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Over 60 ☐

Section B: The Standard of Form Five (F5) English in Macau

Questions

1 2 3 4 5

1. Please comment on what you think is the **level** of achievement in English language of students who have just completed Form Five.

1 = a long way below standard; 2 = below standard; 3 = at the required standard; 4 = above standard; 5 = a long way above standard

2. Approximately what percentage of F5 students are **above** standard?

1 = <20%; 2 = 21-40%; 3 = 41-60%; 4 = 61-80%; 5 = >80%.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Roughly what percentage are **around** the required standard? From the following list please write your choice.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1 = <20%; 2 = 20-40%; 3 = 41-60%; 4 = 61-80%; 5 = >80%.

4. Roughly what percentage are **below** the standard? From the following list please write your choice.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1 = <20%; 2 = 20-40%; 3 = 41-60%; 4 = 61-80%; 5 = >80%.

Section C: Some Aspects of Form Five (F5) Students' Poor English in Macau

1. Some F5 students' English in Macau is poor. From the following list of possible aspects of poor English, please indicate how strong you think each of these is. (1 = very weak aspect; 5 = very strong aspect)

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

(a) Students are poor at reading English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(b) Students are poor at speaking English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(c) Students are poor at writing English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(d) Students are poor at listening to English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(e) Students have to memorize rather than understand English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(f) Students' learning styles in English are poor;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(g) Teachers' teaching styles in English are poor;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(h) Students can enter University, even though their English is poor;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(i) Students do not need English to gain employment in Macau;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(j) English is not needed in everyday life Macau.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(k) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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Section D: Some Purposes of Teaching English in Macau

1. For what ***purposes*** do you think F5 students are taught English in Macau? From the following list of purposes please indicate how important you think these purposes are in Macau.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very little important; 2 = a little important; 3 = quite important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

- (a) To learn an international language
(b) To gain employment

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (c) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
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Section E: Student-related Factors in Accounting for Poor Learning of English in Macau

1. The following list contains student-related factors which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

Students:

- (a) Are shy and afraid of losing face in class;
(b) Have little interest in learning anything, including English;
(c) Are overloaded with other subjects;
(d) Have too many extra-curricular distractions in Macau;
(e) Have limited abilities in English;

(f) Have little incentive to learn fast, as they can repeat courses;
(g) Give little priority to English;
(h) Have a poor foundation for learning English;
(i) Have been given limited direction in their learning;
(j) Have little incentive to learn English, as they can enter Universities even though their English is poor;

(k) Have to start learning English very young;
(l) Cannot relate English to other subjects that they learn at school;
(m) Are lazy
(n) Are not interested in learning English;
(o) Are poor at managing their time;

(p) Only learn what they are taught;
(q) Do not practise their English outside school;
(r) Find English difficult;
(s) Believe that success in life does not depend on school;
(t) Receive little support from their family to learn English;

(u) Regard English as too 'bookish';
(v) Only learn to pass tests and examinations
(w) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

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2. How important a role do you think that student motivation plays in F5 student achievement in English in Macau?

1 2 3 4 5

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

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Section F: Teacher-related Factors in Learning English in Macau

1. How effective do you think the teaching of English is in Macau?

1 = very ineffective; 2 = ineffective; 3 = a little bit effective; 4 = very effective; 5 = extremely effective.

1 2 3 4 5

2. The following list contains teacher-related factors which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

Teachers:

(a) Have poor English knowledge/abilities;

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(b) Do not motivate students enough;

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(c) Do not use a sufficiently wide range of teaching styles;

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(d) Are insufficiently well-prepared;

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(e) Do not have a concerned attitude to their students;

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(f) Are insufficiently well trained/qualified to teach English;

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(g) Are not English majors/specialists;

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(h) Have insufficient in-service training to support their English teaching;

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(i) Use teacher-centered (didactic) methods too much;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(j) Use grammar-translation methods too much;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(k) Rely on drill, rote and memorization methods;

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(l) Provide insufficient opportunities for students to use English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(m) Provide insufficient opportunities for students to think in English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(n) Use too much Chinese rather than English in English lessons;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(o) Give insufficient time to develop students' listening skills;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(p) Place too little emphasis on understanding English;

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(q) 'Spoon-feed' students too much;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(r) Give insufficient time to develop students' writing skills;

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(s) Give insufficient time to students' oral work in English;

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(t) Rely too much on textbooks;

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(u) are not native English speakers themselves;

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(v) keep to the syllabus too much;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(w) leads to rote learning and memorization;

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(x) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

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3. How adequately do you think that your training has prepared you to teach English in Macau?

1 = very inadequately; 2 = inadequately; 3 = adequately; 4 = very adequately; 5 = extremely adequately.

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4. How adequate is the provision for initial training for teachers of English in Macau?

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very inadequate; 2 = inadequate; 3 = adequate; 4 = very adequate; 5 = extremely adequate.

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5. How adequate is the provision for in-service training of teachers of English in Macau?

1 = very inadequate; 2 = inadequate; 3 = adequate; 4 = very adequate; 5 = extremely adequate.

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6. From the following list please indicate which teaching methods you use most frequently in English language teaching.

1 = never; 2 = very rarely; 3 = rarely; 4 = quite often; 5 = very often.

- (a) Didactic
- (b) Whole class teaching
- (c) Experiential learning
- (d) Use of visual aids
- (e) Reliance on text books

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (f) Group activities
- (g) Grammar-translation methods
- (h) Oral activities
- (i) Individual activities
- (j) Project work

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (k) Student-chosen work

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (l) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Which aspects of English language teaching do you tend to focus on? Please indicate on the following list.

1 = never; 2 = very rarely; 3 = rarely; 4 = quite often; 5 = very often.

- (a) Speaking
- (b) Listening
- (c) Reading
- (d) Writing
- (e) Comprehension
- (f) Translation

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (g) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
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8. How important do you consider the role of textbooks is in the teaching of English in Macau?

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

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Section G: Curriculum-related Factors in Learning English in Macau

1. The following list contains curriculum-related factors which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

The English curriculum:

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Is too fixed and rigid; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Is too narrow; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Gives insufficient control and autonomy to teachers; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) Places too great an emphasis on facts; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) Under-emphasizes understanding; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) Requires too much student memorization; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) Contains too much to be covered in the time allowed; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) Is too superficial; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Places too much pressure on teachers; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) Places too much pressure on students; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (k) Under-emphasizes oral work; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (l) Under-emphasizes student autonomy; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (m) Under-emphasizes listening; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (n) Under-emphasizes students' writing; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (o) Is too driven by University entrance requirements; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (p) Is too examination-oriented; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (q) Has to compete too much with other languages in school; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (r) Relies too heavily on following the detail of textbooks; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (s) Relies too much on textbook exercises; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (t) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section H: Organization-related Factors in English Learning in Macau

1. The following list contains organization-related factors which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) large class size; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) large classes leading to limited oral English by students; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) large classes leading to limited group work; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) large classes leading to didactic methods; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) large classes leading to passive learning; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) large classes leading to book learning; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) large classes lead to boring teaching; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) timetabling of English lessons at poor times of the day/week; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) teaching mixed-ability groups of students; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- (j) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20

Section I: Assessment (evaluation)-related Factors in English Learning in Macau

1. To what extent is assessment in English in Macau largely or solely by tests and examination:

1 2 3 4 5

1= not at all; 2 = very little; 3 = quite a lot; 4 = a lot; 5 = a very great deal

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2. The following list contains assessment-related factors which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

- (a) There are too many tests and examinations;
- (b) Tests and examinations dominate the curriculum;
- (c) There is too great an emphasis placed on tests and examination;
- (d) There is too little emphasis placed on forms of assessment other than tests and examinations;
- (e) There is insufficient self-assessment by students;
- (f) There is insufficient self-diagnosis by students;
- (g) Students forget a lot once the examination is over;
- (h) Students' motivation is lowered by the amount of tests and examinations;
- (i) Students' self-esteem suffers from the experience of failure in tests and examinations
- (j) Students resent tests and examinations;
- (k) Teachers resent tests and examinations;

[illegible]

- (I) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

0	0	0	0	0
0	1	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	0

2. From the following list of advantages of tests and examinations in English teaching in Macau, please indicate how useful you consider each to be.

1 = not at all useful; 2 = a little useful; 3 = quite useful; 4 = very useful; 5 = essential

- (a) they ensure that students have really learnt something;
- (b) they put pressure on students to learn;
- (c) they let the teacher know what the students have learnt;
- (d) they test book knowledge;
- (e) they are fair because they are objective;

- (f) they rely on individual work, so they give a fair picture of individuals;
- (g) they are closely related to the syllabus;
- (h) they teach students how to cope in a test-oriented culture;

- (i) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

3 From the following list of disadvantages of tests and examinations in English teaching in Macau, please indicate how strong you consider each to be.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = no disadvantage at all; 2 = quite a disadvantage; 3 = a little disadvantage; 4 = very little disadvantage; 5 = no disadvantage

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) they are inflexible; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) they only test book knowledge, i.e. they are too narrow; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) they put undue pressure on students; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) they put undue pressure on teachers; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) students only study in order to pass them; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) students forget what they have learnt immediately after the test; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) students are not involved in self-assessment; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) students and teachers have no knowledge/experience of other kinds of assessments; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) failure is inbuilt, and students fail so their self-esteem suffers; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) students resent them; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (k) students only learn what will appear on them, i.e. students study for the sake of the test rather than for the sake of the subject; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (l) they exert a narrowing effect on the curriculum; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (m) they punish the weaker students most; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (n) they lead to superficial learning; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (o) they lead to passive learning; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (p) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section J: Mother Tongue and Non-mother tongue English Teachers

1. The following list contains factors relating to mother tongue English speakers, which may be important in accounting for the ineffectiveness of F5 students' English language learning in Macau. From the list please indicate how strong you think each of these reasons to be.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = quite strong; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong.

Teachers whose mother tongue is English:

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Provide more opportunities for students to listen to English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Provide more opportunities to learn about the English language; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Provide more opportunities to learn about English cultures; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) Provide good models of English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) Do not fully appreciate learners' difficulties in English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) Are good for higher forms of students; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) Cannot build effective relationship with learners; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) Make students afraid to use English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Are poor teachers of English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) Lack commitment; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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2. Teachers whose mother tongue is not English:

1 2 3 4 5

- (a) Understand and appreciate students' learning problems well;
 (b) Explain more clearly than mother tongue speakers;
 (c) Can use the students' mother tongue to advantage in explaining;
 (d) Rely on textbooks too greatly;
 (e) Are unable to correct English in their students;

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
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- (f) Are not good models of English;
 (g) Provide insufficient oral activities;
 (h) Provide insufficient written activities;
 (i) Are poor teachers of English;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(j) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. How important for effective English teaching and learning do you think it is for teachers of English to be native/mother-tongue speakers in Macau?

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important;
 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Section K: English culture and learning

From the following list please indicate how important you think that it is for English teachers to include studies of English cultures for English teaching in Macau.

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important;
 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

1 2 3 4 5

- (a) to increase understanding of the English language;
 (b) to know about English culture;
 (c) to increase higher order knowledge of the English language;
 (d) to prepare the more advanced students in English;
 (e) to increase students' English abilities.

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☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(f) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Section L: Effect of Macau society and Culture

From the following list please indicate how important you think the following factors are in affecting students' achievement of English in Macau.

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important;
 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

1 2 3 4 5

- (a) Portuguese is more important than English in Macau;
 (b) Chinese students are too shy to use English in Macau;
 (c) Students' social lives in Macau do not require use of English;
 (d) All other subjects are taught in the medium of Chinese;
 (e) Students do not need English in order to find employment in Macau;

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- (f) Macau is not an English environment; ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- (g) Students do not use English outside school; ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Section M: What should be done to improve English teaching in Macau

From the following list of factors which need to be improved in order to raise the standard of English achievement in Macau, please indicate how important you think that each of them is.

1 = not at all important; 2 = very little importance; 3 = a little bit important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important.

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Teachers should build up a firm foundation for subsequent study; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Teachers should have access to more resources, including multimedia resources; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) the emphasis on quantity should be replaced by an emphasis on quality; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) teachers should understand their students more; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) teachers should use more active, motivating teaching methods; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) Chinese in English classes should only be used in younger classes; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) students should have more opportunity to practise their English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) English should receive more support from school principals; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Student's self-assessments should be increased; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) Parents should support their children more in learning English; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (k) more native English speakers should be employed; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (l) class size must be reduced; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (m) more resources should be provided by the government; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (n) more monitoring of English teaching and achievement should be undertaken by the government; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (o) there should be more EFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) experts to support English teaching and learning in Macau; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (p) native English speakers should be employed for conversational work; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (q) native English speakers should be employed for older/more advanced classes; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (r) Others (please list and, for each, please tick one of the boxes 1-5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. The results will be used to improve the teaching and learning of English in Macau.

Please return it to: Ms. Tang Fun Hei, Convenor, English Language Cluster I, Centre for Pre-University Studies, University of Macau, P. O. Box 3001, Macau.

